My Wanderings

by

HENRY CLAY BARNABEE

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Reminiscences of
Henry Clay Barnabee

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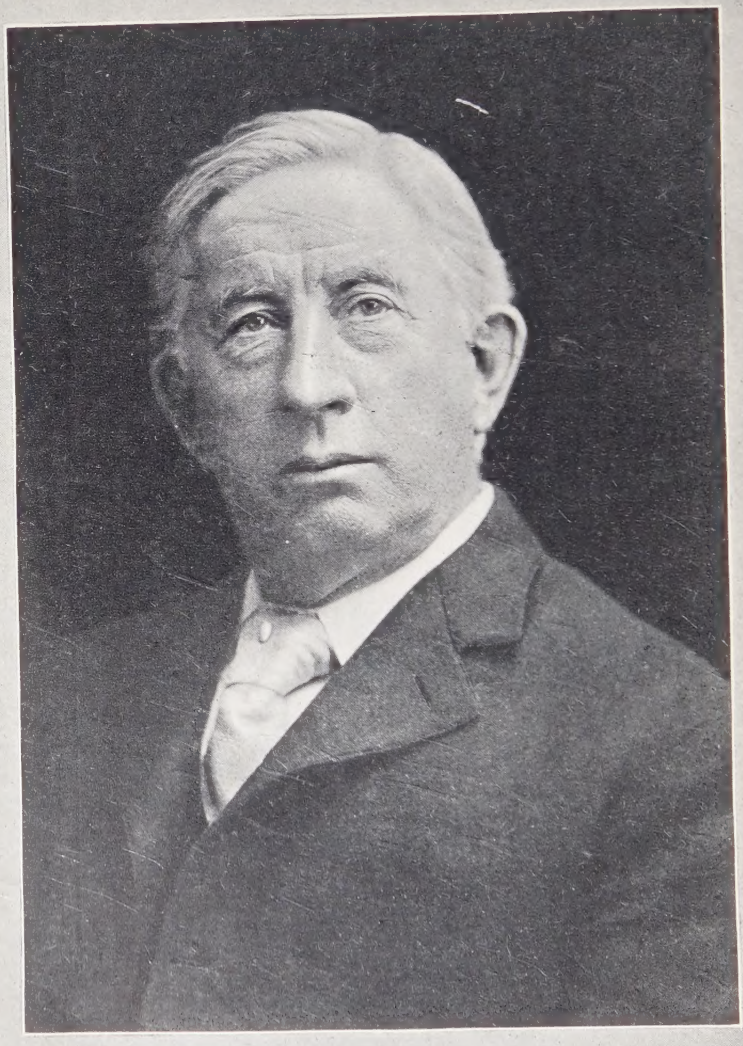

Hale Hearty and Nearly Eighty.

Yours Sincerely,

Henry Clay Barnabee

REMINISCENCES OF

Henry Clay Barnabee

Being an Attempt to Account for His Life, with Some Excuses for His Professional Career

Edited by

GEORGE LEON VARNEY

"What's in a name? For the very large majority, nothing whatsoever. As for the few immortal ones, they were not born to die, because their holders came upon earth to do that which placed them as suns in the firmament of great deeds."—BARNABEE

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BOSTON

To the Memory of

MY BELOVED WIFE

WHO

For Over Fifty Years

WAS

My *"Guiding Star"*

and *"Leading Lady"*

A Card of Thanks

MR. BARNABEE acknowledges here, and does so with a proper feeling of gratitude, the kindness of Mr. Henry Tyrrell of the Sunday Department, *New York World*, and wishes to state that the poem, "Parrhasius and the Captive," printed in this volume, is reproduced from *Shoemaker's Best Selections, No.* 3, by permission of The Penn Publishing Company, Philadelphia.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I—The Cradle by the Sea

CHAPTER II—The Early Dawn

CHAPTER III—Historic Inns and Old Homes

CHAPTER IV—Schooldays

CHAPTER V—First Steps

CHAPTER VI—Still Lingering in Old "Porchmouth"

CHAPTER VII—Early Visit to Boston

CHAPTER VIII—Tuning Up and Playing

CHAPTER IX—Customers, Commuters and Costumes

CHAPTER X—Waiting at the Church

CHAPTER XI—First Operatic Awakenings

CHAPTER XII—Harking Back to the Boston Theatre

CHAPTER XIII—Awakening of Critical Appreciations

CHAPTER XIV—"Too Late for the Train"

CHAPTER XV—With William Warren at the Boston Museum

CHAPTER XVI—"The Cork Leg" and "The Patent Arm"

CHAPTER XVII—The Peace Jubilees and the Apollo Club

CHAPTER XVIII—Melody in Music

CHAPTER XIX—Are You a Mason?

CONTENTS—Continued

Chapter XX—Dickens, Thackeray and Other Worthies
Chapter XXI—A Patchwork of Song and Story
Chapter XXII —Invading the West
Chapter XXIII—The Good Old Summer Times
Chapter XXIV—Bound for "Yurrip"
Chapter XXV—Doing Dear Old "Lunnon"
Chapter XXVI—A Short Trip Through "Yurrip"
Chapter XXVII—Birth of the Boston Ideals
Chapter XXVIII—"H. M. S. Pinafore"
Chapter XXIX—Rounding Out a Repertoire
Chapter XXX—The Ideals During the Ober Regime
Chapter XXXI—Fond Recollections
Chapter XXXII—The Original and Only Bostonians
Chapter XXXIII—To the Golden Gate
Chapter XXXIV—"Robin Hood"
Chapter XXXV—Touring in Semi-"Grand"
Chapter XXXVI—The Oberammergau Passion Play
Chapter XXXVII "The Serenade" and Evening Shadows
Chapter XXXVIII—Friendly Memories

TO THE READER

I DEEM it hardly necessary for me to introduce to you the "Grand Old Man" whose name has had a most familiar sound in the musical and operatic annals of this country. And yet for me to hesitate to avail myself of the opportunity of uttering a few words before the curtain is drawn, would but be making light of a debt which I owe our artist and friend.

Today as I present his beloved name, the doors of the years back of us swing upon their hinges. From the low-vaulted chambers fragrant memories rise like sweet incense out of the smouldering embers of hallowed fires; stars that have long since been devoid of their brilliancy twinkle again in far-off heavens; silent temples that have mingled their dust with the ancient edifices of Rome and Athens are silhouetted in space, and the shadowy forms of those who once crowded their prosceniums come singing and dancing to the strains of resurrected songs.

I see, as in a vision, a procession of immortal bards and masters; I see a company of artists pass by in glorious array; I see vast assemblages shouting, beckoning and applauding; I hear celestial songs and I hear voices eloquent and pathetic ringing down dark corridors; I stand in the midst of buried hopes and dreams, and I touch the withered garlands that hang over crushed joys and tarnished expectations; I reach forth as a child to pick up a flower that's tossed by some admiring friend, but,—lo and behold, as though its petals were sacred to human caress, down falls the thin veil that separates the past from the present and I am caught in the folds of the darkened divide.

TO THE READER

No, it's not a dream! The name of Henry Clay Barnabee is the magical "open sesame" to the days and nights that lie buried beneath the sunshine and shadows of fallen years. Like the Ancient Mariner, the venerable exponent of the golden age of song and story takes us and leads us from the noises of the struggling present to where the mists and rainbows gather o'er the slumbering past.

And now, before we proceed on our memorable journey, allow me to say that nearly eighty long and eventful summers have passed through the hour glass of time since Mr. Barnabee first saw the peep of dawn. Think what it all means. Think of the advancements and achievements that have been made in the arts and sciences since his chalice was first inverted; think how the geographical world has changed; think of the growth in the religious, scientific, medical, literary and historical fields; think of the losses, the crosses and the piles of pillaged plunder; think of the fall of kingdoms and the clash of arms; think of the cost of human endeavor and the price of our National laws; think if you will of the few honored names that have found a place on our lips, and think of the shafts reared "to our unknown dead." Yea, think of a thousand of things, too numerous to mention, that have had their birth and inception since the cradle gave us the namesake of Henry Clay. After you have done all this—searching records and studying cold statistics—and have scanned the present horizon, you have some faint idea of what Henry Clay Barnabee could point out to us or assist Clio in recording on the pages between these covers.

But thanks be it, Mr. Barnabee, the sponsor, the father, the head, the guide and the pride of all Bostonians, does not make any effort to present us with such a voluminous record of historical facts and figures. His own particular field has been in the amusement world; and in the following pages he has simply attempted to place in our hands his

last and final offering—the story of his own brilliant career and a record of some of the personal peculiarities of a host of noted singers, musicians and artists who have been his associates for over half a century.

To you, as one of the vast number who shall accept these "immortal remains," I have but to say that the optimistic, humorous and quaintly philosophical traits which have endeared Mr. Barnabee to the world so long are constantly in evidence throughout the work, and the language is substantially his own.

I refrain from placing here any slight tribute from my feeble pen. I have left it for others, more capable than myself, to speak of the worth of Mr. Barnabee as a reader, a singer and a comedian. To me Henry Clay Barnabee wears no fancy costumes—he stands before my limelight as a dear friend from whom I have received many warm personal attentions. He is known to many as a prince of good fellows, and, in the fraternal spirit, as a brother; but I know him only as a man, the kind of a man that I would call a gentleman. When his final curtain falls, hundreds of his admirers and acquaintances will forget him as a fellow-player and singer. In that hour when his voice will be hushed, and the stage will be darkened and the music will die away, of him it may be well said, aside from his great place and merit as a musician and friend, that

> His life was gentle, and the elements
> So mixed in him, that Nature might stand up
> And say to all the world, *"This was a Man!"*

And now, dear reader, allow me to introduce to you that sterling character who has played many parts, but none better than the role of the Man—Henry Clay Barnabee.

GEORGE LEON VARNEY.

Reminiscences of
Henry Clay Barnabee

Chapter I

THE CRADLE BY THE SEA

BIRTH OF THE ONLY BARNABEE.—BIRTH OF OLD HOME CELEBRATIONS.—BIRTH OF FAMOUS SONS AND DAUGHTERS.—BIRTH OF BARNABEE IN FICTION.

"My heart 'mid all changes, wherever I roam,
Ne'er loses its love for the cradle at home."
—Henry Clay Barnabee.

ON THE fourteenth of November, 1833, the day following the birth of Edwin Booth at Belair, Maryland, occurred the event which made a certain antique dwelling-house in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, marked in that town's annals as "the home of Willis Barnabee, father of Henry Clay Barnabee, the famous singer."

Someone has remarked that when good Dame Nature ushered the Booth baby and the Barnabee baby into the world with but a few hours between the one and the other, she was only serving the prophets with another exemplification of the ancient proverb: "Mirth follows closely at the heels of Tragedy." If

this be true and in accord with the divine ordering of careers, Edwin Booth—(Alas! poor Yorick!)—was cradled to become a tragedian, and, as such, his life's work was to be the task of portraying the serious side of human nature—of interpreting the mad scenes, of strutting the stage as a hero robed in royal bearing, and of striving to win the laurels due a real dramatic genius.

And what of the other babe? Well, I was he, and, in obedience to the Father's will, I was born—if the above declaration holds true—to be known as a disciple of Comedy, to be respected as a messenger of good cheer, to be hailed as a warbler of joy and gladness, and to be remembered as one who tried to convince Tragedy that the world is a house of mirth instead of a castle of skull and crossbones.

"Strong in the faith that what is to be
Of good or ill will be well for me"—

must have been the couplet penned for our individual belief. At any rate it has always been mine; and Booth, as we all know, believed and trusted in a Power that shapes the course of mankind to its own decrees. His large and noble faith in all that is and is to be told him in his sphere what it has taught me in mine, viz.:—that after all the tempests and storms of life have been encountered, death, even at its worst, must be the only perfect peace.

The greatest Hamlet of the American stage passed away June 7, 1893, leaving on this side of the fallen curtain scores of fellow-players, many of whom still

mourn his loss, but who, like myself in turn, must follow him through the darkened valley, where, as Lord Lytton says—

. . . the stars go down
To rise upon some fairer shores.

Having survived the allotted threescore years and ten, and my mind at ease as to what the future has in store for me, I am going to retrace my steps to the little cradle for the purpose of reviewing my own career. And as I journey along, I am going to pick up the broken threads of the past and weave them into a garland which, I hope, shall endure as the immortal remains of a long and eventful life.

As Portsmouth, the place of my nativity, has been gathering the moss of quaint, curious and memorable associations from the advent of the early settlers in 1623 to the signing of the Russo-Japanese Treaty in 1905, I ought to assist her as best I can by adding a few "pickings from the wayside" to her cherished collections. And, dear reader, as my mind reverts back, reviving with tender and soul-subduing influence the memory of past scenes of pleasures, I must admit that the word *Portsmouth* spells out the height and depth, length and breadth of many tender memories.

It was in Portsmouth that the "Old Home Week" custom, now prevalent among New England towns and elsewhere, originated, more than half a century ago. I know, because I was in the grand historical pageant, sitting cross-legged on one of the floats, dressed as a

Turk, at a midsummer temperature of a hundred degrees in the shade and trying to smoke dried pennyroyal in a hubble-bubble, which made me so ill that I have never since indulged in the weed or even had the ambition to "make good" as a disciple of Sir Walter Raleigh.

Among the scores of the distinguished sons whom the Old Home Weeks used to round up in Portsmouth were included: Daniel Webster, Jeremiah Mason, Ichabod Bartlett, John Mitchell Sewell, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, James T. Fields, of Boston celebrity in connection with the "Corner Bookstore," the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine and the publishing business generally; Harriet McEwen Kimball, poetess; Benjamin P. Shillaber, creator of the inimitable "Mrs. Partington"; and the Rev. Thomas Starr King, whose father before him had preached in Portsmouth's venerable Universalist church. And there was one of our town celebrities, who, though his name be not inscribed on history's ample page, deserves to go on record as one of the sturdy pioneers of the "simplified spelling," for his dinner address of welcome to the illustrious visitors, as sent in manuscript to the *Journal* printing-office to be set up in type, opened with the undying phrase:—

. . . . "We feel by your presents here" . . . .

More than one great man who neglected to be brought in as a "distinguished son" by the stork, has sought later to remedy the oversight by taking up his

residence there or managing some way or other to be rung in as an "adopted son."

If Portsmouth, as a naval station, cannot claim Admiral Dewey, of Manila fame, as one of her sons, she has at least a kind of first mortgage upon him as a son-in-law. It was in Portsmouth that young Lieutenant George Dewey married his first wife, in 1867. She was a Miss Susie Goodwin, daughter of Hon. Ichabod Goodwin, War Governor of New Hampshire.

Mrs. Goodwin, who was a grande dame of the ultra-Brahmin caste, never quite reconciled herself to receiving the obscure young naval officer into "our set." Although he had served with credit, if not renown, throughout the Civil War, he seemed to bear no brevet-mark of future greatness, and the proud mother-in-law learned to ignore his existence. But the whirligig of time brought its revenge; and when, on the second of May, 1898, the news was cabled from Manila to old Portsmouth and all the rest of the world that Admiral Dewey had won the greatest sea victory since Trafalgar, it was really a pity that Mrs. Goodwin, the uncompromising Mrs. Goodwin, was not alive to hear of it.

Like all good mothers, my native city has ever received her guests with open arms and warm heart; and in doing so, she not only has honored the occasions and the strangers within her gates, but highly honored herself as well. In her autobiography, we read that John Hancock, Elbridge Gerry, Edward Rutledge and other signers of the Declaration of Independence sat

at her table. Among the other chief celebrities who have paid her a visit have been General Knox, Marquis Lafayette, Louis Philippe and his brothers, the Ducs de Montpensier and Beaujolais, Marquis de Chastellux, John Paul Jones, Commodore Isaac Hull, and—the greatest of them all—President George Washington. Even the one famous Smith—Captain John Smith—whose name is linked with that of an Indian maid, dropped anchor at that point where now shine the lights of one of the safest and most commodious harbors in the United States.*

So generally recognized has the hospitality of Portsmouth become known that when in 1898 the smoke of Santiago Harbor, Cuba, had lifted itself, seventeen hundred prisoners, subjects of Spain, including Rear Admiral Pascual Cervera, were picked up by Uncle Sam and placed on my mother's doorstep. But her

* Thomas Bailey Aldrich pays a tribute to his native city's greatness—past greatness I might add—when he says, "Portsmouth remains the interesting widow of a once very lively commerce. Formerly it turned out the best ships, as it did the ablest ship captains, in the world. There were families in which the love for blue waters was an immemorial trait. The boys were always sailors; a gray-headed shipmaster, in each generation, retiring from the quarter-deck to the homestead, while a boy of fourteen took the hereditary place before the mast, confronting the salt spray and gale which had blasted against his sire and grandsire." From "An Old Town By the Sea."

It is interesting to note, in connection with this line, that some of the most powerful vessels afloat have weighed anchor in Portsmouth's waters, and, on more than one occasion, the entire Atlantic Squadron has steamed into her harbor. In relation to ship-building, she is certainly entitled to highest praise. The "Ranger," the vessel believed to have been the first ship to fly the stars and stripes, was built by her; "Franklin," the first ship to unfurl the flag of a United States Admiral in European waters, had her keel laid in her Navy Yard; and the famous sloop-of-war "Kearsarge," the "Sartee" and the "Saranac" have been among her distinguished water-babies. Editor.

MR. BARNABEE OFF THE STAGE AT DIFFERENT PERIODS OF HIS CAREER

cradle was not too full to receive them. Theodore Low pays a most deserving compliment to her lovable ways, in connection with this incident, when he says, "Great was the surprise, when the time came to send the prisoners back to their native country, to find that it was hard to drive them away, so well had they been fed, clothed and treated."

But the prisoners of war had to go home, despite their longings to remain with my brothers. When the final roll was called on the twelfth of September, it was found that thirty-seven of them were missing. Where were they? Wounded and stricken when placed in the cradle, these silent warriors of the crushed armada had fallen asleep, and

> All the king's men,
> And all the royal summons,
> Could not call them back again.

On a knoll at Camp Long, they are still asleep; and as the grasses wave gently over their eternal resting place, the magic lights of Portsmouth keep a sentinel's watch, and the beat of the old ocean on the rocky shore

> "makes music wild and sweet."

Verily, their first "coming" had been their last "going" home.

Speaking of "going home," someone among us may ask, "Who originated the idea of calling the children of Portsmouth home again?" The Portsmouth *Times* makes an effort to settle the question when it says:

"Who originated the idea is a question of dispute even to this late day, but history says that the first real movement looking towards a gathering or home-coming of the sons was made by Messrs. Theodore Harris, Robert Harris and Albert Remick as early as March, 1853, in the store in which the former was employed as clerk. Finding their consultations interrupted by frequent callers, they soon changed their headquarters to Col. Ezra Lincoln's office in Court Street. Here they came together day after day in their spare moments to talk over the scheme. The idea was taken up by B. P. Shillaber, Esq., of Boston, a newspaper man by profession, and by his writings the attention of sons and daughters all over the country was attracted.

"It was the intention to hold these reunions every ten years. Because of the War none was held in 1863, and the second home-coming was in 1873, twenty years after the first. This was the biggest kind of a success, the city's council alone appropriating ten thousand dollars. In 1883 the elaborate plans for the third reunion were spoiled by rain. It rained all day and rained hard, all outdoor exercises had to be given up. Only the literary exercises were carried out according to the program. For some reason no interest was manifest in 1893 or 1903 and the idea of another return of the sons was looked upon as lost.

"It remained for Councilman E. Percy Stoddard to revive the home-coming in 1910. It was an off year,

to be sure, but this son of Portsmouth had a 'bee in his bonnet' and he fought until the sting became general."

The result of Mr. Stoddard's efforts! Well, my reader, if you were fortunate enough to have been present in the "old town by the sea," July 4, 1910, you know the rest. It was truly the biggest day in all of Portsmouth's history. Aside from being the 124th anniversary of American liberty, it was the class day, so to speak, of over two thousand patriotic boys and girls who, as Rev. Dr. Burroughs informs us, "assembled to refresh their memories and regale their hearts with the scenes of their childhood; with the schools where they acquired the elements of knowledge; with the fields, where they gathered the love of nature; with the abodes, precious for parental endearments; and with the temples, where they first lisped their public devotions and learned the lessons of divine truth."

Thus you know the reasons why the children of old Portsmouth took affectionate interest, pride and gratitude, and returned home when the call was made. And need I say that I was among the first to respond to the appeal?

To assist in home-coming jubilees twenty, ten, and nearly thirty-four years apart, is not every man's privilege. Such, however, has been mine. In 1853 an enthusiastic participant in the preliminaries, one of the cheering throng who made the air resound with

the welcome home of throbbing hearts, following the boys and the bands, as they made their circuit of the well-remembered places—the Old Mill Bridges, the Old South, under the magnificent decorations on Market Street and elsewhere, sitting in the tent and listening to the eloquence of Starr King, James T. Fields, B. P. Shillaber, Ichabod Goodwin, and a host of others; in 1873, the reader, by request of the poet, of the beautiful verses of Albert Laighton; in 1883, the medium of communication between Thomas Bailey Aldrich and the High School Alumni; lastly, one of the honored speakers of the day, July 4, 1910.

And yet this record of the meetings of the sons and daughters would be incomplete if I failed to mention the reunion which took place on Thursday evening, February 16, 1911, at the Hotel Bellevue, Boston, when Portsmouth's children living in Massachusetts met for a few brief hours. On this auspicious occasion, I again offered the "Ode of Welcome" written by Mr. Laighton.

Pardon me, but the Portsmouth *Times* in speaking of this last meeting says, among other things:

"Barnabee, though now nearly seventy-eight years old, still has much of the vigor of 1873, when at the age of forty he read this brilliant production at the reunion of that year in the mammoth tent at Portsmouth on July 4th, and prefaced it by the following:

"'Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:—To other lips belong the utterances of wisdom and wit which the reminiscences of this glad day of jubilee will call forth; mine the

privilege of acting as interpreter for my friend, whose modesty is only equalled by his ability. [Applause.] Glad shall I be if my voice can give proper expression to the kindling words of our home poet, whose welcoming ode I now read.' "

WELCOME HOME!

Where robed in beauty vale and upland lie,
Bathed in the glory of this summer sky;
Where evermore
The beat of ocean on the rocky shore
Makes music wild and sweet;
And ever free, the fleet
  Blue river winds by isle and bay;
O brothers, wandering far for many a year,
O sisters dear,
  We welcome you today!
O happy bells, ring out!
  Each breast responsive thrills:
  Ye valleys and ye hills
Give back our greeting shout!
While strains of sweetest music charm the air,
  And starry banners float in skies of blue;
And blossoming arch and wreathed column bear
  The heart's endearing language warm and true.

What recollections throng,
What tender thoughts arise,
As here, beneath your native skies,
  Once more ye stand!
Here live the echoes of your cradle song;
This is the fairy realm of childhood's time;
Youth's blest Arcadian clime;
The dream of manhood's prime;
  The shrine of age; th' Enchanted Land,
  By airs of memory gently fanned;

The dearest spot beneath the heaven's blue dome—
This, this is home.
Home, with its streams and woods;
Its cool, green solitudes
  In sylvan places;
Its favorite haunts remembered long and well;
Home, where dear kindred dwell,
  And friendly faces
Reflect our own, and kindly greeting give;
Where many a loved one lies in dreamless rest
In yonder churchyard by the moaning wave;
Ah! nevermore
By sea or shore
Shall hand in hand be joined, or lip to lip be prest;
Still they are with us here,
We feel their presence near;
They speak to us and soul to soul replies;
For love, love never dies;
Love is a flower that evermore shall live.
Of heavenly birth,
It knows no blight of earth,
And blossoms even on the dusty grave;
Home, with its memories sweet, its hopes, its fears,
Its gladness and its tears.

O fair, sweet Mother, cradled by the sea,
Thy wandering children rest
Once more upon thy breast
Where they have longed to be!
Where'er they roamed, beneath what alien skies
  Their lot was cast,
Their thoughts still turned to thee,
And homesick tears have gathered to their eyes;
Thou wert the star whose ray

Shone o'er the dusky pathway of the past,
And led them where their fondest treasures lay.

And we who never from thy side have strayed;
Whose hearts to thine are ever closely laid,
In thy dear name we welcome them again;
Our hearts go out to meet them;
Our hands stretch forth to greet them,
Our lips rehearse once more
The welcome song of yore,
And answering lips repeat the joyful strain.

And they, thy noble sons,
The brave, true-hearted ones,
Who fought in Freedom's name,
For country and for thee
Amid this festal scene
We keep their memories green;
Whether upon the blood-stained field they fell,
Or where the battle-flame
Lit up the wreck upon the heaving sea;
Whether they languished in the weary cell,
Or, worn with pain, they turned to thee for rest,
And died upon thy breast;
Where'er for us they perished
Each patriot soul is cherished;
Where'er their graves are found,
To us 'tis hallowed ground;
And there on each returning spring
The sweetest flowers we bring.
O brothers, wandering far for many a year,

O, sisters dear,
In this our glad reunion
Our hearts as one are beating!

One joyous impulse every breast elates;
And though the parting word be spoken
The spell shall not be broken;
The warm and heartfelt greeting,
The sweet communion;
The charm that rests on river, sea and shore,
The hue of sky and plain.
These, in the mystic wreath that Memory twines,
Shall be the fadeless flowers;
And thoughts of these glad hours
Shall blend with visions of a happier sphere
Than that which holds us here;
A summer land that lieth far away;
Where late or soon
Our paths shall join again
Divided nevermore.
A city measured with the golden reed,
Whose walls are jasper, and whose gates
(Each gate a pearl) close not by day,
And whose foundations broad
With precious stones are bright;
A home that hath no night,
Nor any need
Of sun or moon,
But where forever shines
The glory of the Lord.

I seem to be one of the connecting links between the past and the present, and I am proud of it. Not indeed as the Irishman said, "A man should be proud of the place of his nativity, whether he was born there or not," but proud because I am from Portsmouth, of Portsmouth and for Portsmouth.

The designation of "the only Barnabee," in my latter professional years tagged upon me by kind friends and enthusiastic press-agents, was in truth a legitimate inheritance from my dear father, Willis Barnabee. I have never encountered the name thus spelled either before his time or since—with but one notable exception. That exception is found in the quaint old work of Seventeenth century Latinity known as "Barnabee Itinerarium" or "Barnabee's Journal"—a rollicking, rambling Bacchanalian chronicle in rhyme, supposed to be of the renowned literary progeny of one Richard Brathwait, a contemporary of Shakespeare.

And I might remark that the extraordinary thing about my English namesake's itinerary is that, like my own, it took in a wide circuit of one-night stands, full of such startling coincidences as the following:

> Thence to *Gottam* (Gotham) where sure am I,
> Though not all fooles I saw many;
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Thence to Nottingam (Nottingham) where rovers,
> Highway riders, *Sherwood* drovers,
> Like old *Robin Hood* and *Scarlet*
> Or like little John his varlet.

You may hardly believe it, but the following startling lines are extracted from the song by Brathwait in Barnabee Itineraries. The places noted would naturally lead you to think that they were penned by a modern New England writer instead of being, as they are, from

the quill of one who flourished in England some two hundred years ago:—

"Barnabee, Barnabee, thou'st been drinking,
I can tell by nose and thy eyes winking.
Drunk at Portsmouth, drunk at Dover,
Drunk at Newcastle, and drunk all over,
Hey Barnabee! tak't for a warning,
Be no more drunk nor dry in a mourning."

After nearly three hundred years of a passing existence, the *ruminiscences* of the worshipper of Bacchus must give way to the *reminiscences* of the true and living Barnabee. If truth be indeed stranger than fiction how much longer the record of the real shall endure over the chronicle of the false depends entirely upon the days that are yet to come.

And now, as I start from the cradle for a long journey on life's road, I see before me as a mirage the trail of the various stages through which I must pass, and the outlines of the stages on which I must act. With Shakespeare, I am ready to admit that:

"All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players.
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages."

After I have rehearsed my many parts in the following pages, and made my many exits and entrances, I sincerely hope that you will be seized with an impulse

to go with me to another reunion of the Sons and Daughters of Portsmouth.

Perhaps while I am writing this volume of sunshine and pleasures, some future Webster is sitting in the lap of my Alma Mater, or maybe the child playing with the rattle is to be an Aldrich or a Fields. Who knows? And when the sun goes down tonight, maybe the stars will twinkle o'er a cradle in which lies slumbering some future Celia Thaxter—or maybe the child is born to become a peerless tragedian or a noted comedian. At any rate, Portsmouth proudly exults today in her infants, and as she rocks them to sleep, mindless of what the future may have in store for them, she exclaims, as did the mother of the Gracchii—

"Lo! These Are My Jewels!"

Chapter II

THE EARLY DAWN

THE LOST CHORD.—A BURNING EPISODE.—NAMESAKE OF HENRY CLAY.—DANIEL WEBSTER, CITIZEN OF PORTSMOUTH.—PERENNIAL YOUTH.

"Here's to life, our entrance to it naked and bare,
Our progress thru it trouble and care;
Our exit from it, God knows where,—
But if you'll do well here—you'll do well there."

—An Old Toast.

SPEAKING of my own arrival, I have been told it was welcomed and discussed in all its bearings by the otherwise unemployed neighborhood, duly chronicled in the family Bible and the town newspapers, and took its place in the more or less great happenings.

However, an oversight on the part of my elders in connection with the happy event, has, in later years, been noted as a lost *chord*. Their failure to *note* the exact hour and minute of my being ushered into the *choir visible* was a *musical error* which I have always lamented, since, as you will learn, when I consulted a famed astrologer for my horoscope, the absence of exact information on the subject prevented his giving me correct advice in the matter of drawing to straights, and four-flushes—the right horse to back—the exact

time to invest in productive real estate—the Bell Telephone—and to rival in earthly possession that man of whom I once sang—

I have heard of a man who posed as a Saint,
Once upon a time.
Who got rich, it was said,
By means without taint,
Once upon a time.

Sometimes, it is said,
He gave thousands away,
But evened things up
With higher prices next day.
Now, wouldn't that rock-a-feller
I can hear them all say,
Once upon a time.

Thus it will be observed that, by the omission of the apparently trifling date, attending my first entrance, I have been prevented from contributing, in my well-known character of Easy-Money Barnabee, to the amelioration of the condition of God's poor and ignorant everywhere—of beautifying all the waste places—of irrigating the vast and boundless West, and making it bloom and blossom like the rose—of protecting the levees of the "Father of Waters"—of helping the Wizard of California in his schemes of perfecting fruits and flowers, and of feeding the world; of expediting Peary with all the appliances which wealth could furnish in his hunt for the North Pole; of assisting the re-establishment of American commerce by a system of ship subsidies which would place the United

States on an equality with other nations—of erecting art theatres in every intellectual centre where the masterpieces could be properly interpreted and where actors, as in other countries, could set the pace for the correct pronunciation of our beautiful language—of placing, by the use of persistent argument and spreading broadcast the proper information, the voting privilege upon an educational and common-sense basis; thus settling the negro and all other problems, and giving honest government to nation, city, town and village (think of honest government for New York City!) and in short—all of these instrumentalities having been day dreams with me ever since I was old enough to think of doing things and in any and every effort to "lend a hand," as our reverend and revered Edward Everett Hale said, for the Universal Good. Selah!

It was not observed, on the day that I was born, that there was any universal disturbance terrestrial or otherwise. It might have been a *cold* day, but I did not get *left*. My principal interest in the matter centers in the fact, already mentioned, that it followed so closely the birth of that illustrious actor, Edwin Booth, an incident which has always been of great interest to my humble self. On my first visit to a real theater, I saw Mr. Booth's father, Junius Brutus Booth, play "Brutus" in John Howard Payne's tragedy of that name; and during the engagement Edwin must have made his first appearance on any stage.

If it was ever said of me, "He is such a good baby," the information was withheld and has never reached me. On the contrary, I was afterwards told that, quite early, when I had just begun to toddle, I developed the purest kind of infantile cussedness, in manifesting a faculty for having my own way, which was very trying to the devoted caretakers, to say the least.

In one instance I paid dearly for it by evincing a burning desire for get-away-itiveness. It happened in this way:

The family, with the exception of the sister who was detailed as nurse and was on guard for the day, were just seated for supper. A beefsteak had just been removed from the gridiron, which was smoking over the live coals in the old-fashioned fireplace. I was being disrobed, previous to being put in my little bed, a process which I resisted with all my baby strength, and was already in my birthday suit for encasement in my "nightie," when I detached myself from my sister's hold, and before she could jump and reach me, had seated myself on the burning, broiling implement and was grilled to a turn.

A sojourn of three months on a pillow, carefully poulticed, watched and tended, crushed my propensity for a "pull" and taught me, as only a "fiery experience" could, the old adage, "a burnt child dreads the fire."

The family history does not record any remark I made on the burning episode, but I must have antici-

pated the future and thought, "Here goes another martyr to the *steak*."

Speaking of "steak" reminds me. Some sixty years after the above "warm reception," I had occasion to offer myself, along with a few other "Lambs," as a *burnt* sacrifice on Comedy's altar. However, as the match was never applied to the fagots and the burning never got any farther than the *inward* feeling of seeing ourselves the flaming subjects of a lost cause, I am spared to relate why our names are not inscribed on tablets in the "Hall of Martyrs" today.

It seems we were appearing in a playlet, and, after the curtain had ascended, it was my official duty to walk to the footlights and offer a few complimentary remarks to the house. The bouquet having been offered and the applause having ceased, I then proceeded to launch our program, pushing it along with this take-it-as-you-please remark:

"For our little entertainment we ask your kind and friendly indulgence. Should we fail to please, it is your privilege, as they do with bad actors in China, to chop off our heads or burn us at the stake. You can take your choice—chop or stake (steak)."

After the final curtain, I reappeared and attempted to wait on the audience, asking the sentence which was supposed to seal our fate—"Is it chop or stake (steak)?" The storm of applause which followed wet the fagots and gave the would-be martyrs ample time in which to find the shortest "cut" to the outer world. Since

then, I've never asked myself or others to serve as "chops" or "steaks."

Pardon the confession here, but, while speaking of applause, I must say I like it. There is nothing sweeter than the rippling of the impact of dainty gloved hands and the more sonorous reverberations of the hardened palms of men. It proves to the actor that he has made a place for himself in the affectionate regard of the great mass of human beings known as the Public. It says, as if in so many words, "Go ahead, old boy, we're with you."

My father, being a good Whig, named me for Henry Clay, and my younger brother for Daniel Webster. I remember his relating with glee how those two giants of the United States Senate, coming one day from the Capitol at Washington, chanced to see a "flock" of mules driven along Pennsylvania Avenue, whereupon Clay remarked banteringly:

"Webster, there go some of your constituents."

"Yes, sir," replied the ready Daniel, "they are going down to Kentucky to teach school."

Although as soon as I grew old enough to take pride in such things I wrote my name, "H. Clay Barnabee," and subsequently "Henry Clay Barnabee" in full, I never saw the great American whose name was borrowed for my christening.

But one of the most impressive among my early recollections is that of having gazed upon the living and Jove-like presence of Daniel Webster. I can see

him now as he looked that day in Portsmouth, more than threescore years ago—his massive frame and magnificent head surmounted by a broad-brimmed "stovepipe" hat—his dark, deep-set, cavernous eyes smoldering beneath their overhanging brows, which reminded me of the coping of a cathedral—his firm-set lips and determined chin.

He wore a high black stock and collar, a blue coat with brass buttons, a buff waistcoat, and loosely hanging trousers. A veritable king among men was our eloquent expounder of the Constitution.

To this day, I have never ceased wondering why, in the recurrent revival of old customs and costumes, some modern Beau Brummel has not thought it worth while to resurrect the blue coat, brass buttons and buff waistcoat of the early Nineteenth Century.

And now, in drawing the account of my baby days to a close, let me introduce my parents to you and tell you how I got acquainted with them.

I can remember my dear mother, a little woman engrossed in household duties and the care of seven children; my father, a stalwart man with occupations which took him away from home a great deal of the time, stern but tender, as if to make me feel that the "velvet" hand held a sword of steel; my elder brother, going away to sea before I knew him and never returning, my three sisters, older than myself, dividing the care of my younger brother and the wayward youth who is writing this.

My father was a noted whip in those palmy days of the stage coach, his route for many years being between Portland and Boston via Portsmouth. He had the honor of driving Lafayette into our town, on the occasion of that illustrious Frenchman's last tour of America, in 1824, and the highway over which he passed is called the Lafayette Road to this day.

In this auto age, the Portsmouth boy of fifty years delights to recall the high-stepping steeds which ushered forth from the stage stable on Washington Street, driven by some of the hostlers full of the importance of the temporary post of honor on the box, called at the postoffice for the changed mails and swept up over the Parade, rounding into Congress Street, and bringing up before the "General Stage Office," with heads towards Boston. The passengers from the east took a fresh start, as the Eastern Stage Company line extended no farther east, and the Portland Stage Company operated no farther west than the stage office in this city. On some pleasant day at noon as passers-by on Congress Street wended their way home to dinner, the passengers who an hour before had landed from the Portland mail on its arrival at twelve o'clock would be embarking under the guidance of Robert W. Annable, or that counterpart of the Senior Weller, Samuel Robinson, while on Sunday the sedate Elijah B. Young would hold the ribbons.

The drivers mounted the box carrying with them up Congress Street a sense of the magnitude of their

position. The lucky holders of the outside seat had already tendered the customary conciliatory cigar without which no one would be so impolitic as to attempt the enjoyment of a fifty-six mile drive; for if the drivers did not smoke themselves their friends did, and the boy of the period looked on and wondered when the time would arrive when he could have a stage ride to Boston with a seat on the box. There may have visited the imagination of some unheard-of boy of that day and generation visions of a higher happiness than this, but history fails to record the fact that he ever disclosed it.

My father was a trusted agent of the line, scrupulously careful, devoting his attention not only to his passengers, but attending to the banking and express business between the smaller towns and Boston. In the course of years of industry and thrift, dating back to the war-time of 1812, he amassed what was then regarded as a comfortable little fortune, and was looking forward to a period of ease, comfort and hospitality in the decline of life.

But, alas! for human plans and foresight. He had a friend whom he loved and trusted. In an evil hour he became that friend's security in a business deal, furnished him with a very large sum of money—and then awoke one morning to the heart-sickening fact that his confidence had been basely betrayed. The man he had trusted had decamped to parts unknown. Hearing afterwards that he had been seen somewhere

in South America, my father took passage in a small sailing vessel, and went on the trail. He was one hundred and twenty days on the voyage, suffering atrociously from seasickness all the way. But the chase proved futile, after all, and my father came back home to make a fresh start in life.

How many times in later life have I thought of my poor father and the promised returns for an investment, and recalled the old lines,—

"I had a dollar and a friend
On whom I set great store,
I loaned that dollar to that friend
And saw that friend no more.
Had I my dollar and my friend
On whom I set great store,
I'd keep my dollar and my friend,
And play the fool no more."

But I always did!

Of my variegated list of investments, I can recall only one from which I ever got back a dollar of my principal, though I paid heavy assessments with a monotonous frequency rarely broken by the apparition of a diminutive profit or dividend. In fact, it may be written that my entire career was an *accident policy*—not like the one I took out in early life, in that benevolent institution—the itinerants' assurance company—paying premium for forty-eight years, during which time several boards of directors made fortunes and retired—and when I temporarily disappeared from the

stage, by reason of a really serious accident, at the age of seventy-one, found that, by a change in the organization of these progressive gentlemen, my policy had lapsed and *forty-eight premiums* had been swallowed in the vortex of dishonesty, avarice and greed, where so many reputations are forever engulfed.

In games of chance I was ever the loser. The "boys" who have met me in many a tournament on the field of the cloth of green, can recall "me, at five o'clock in the morning, looking wearily for the touch of a vanished hand" and the "chips" that never "passed my way" in the night. And in the arena where swift runners contend for the mastery, I always read of my horse, "The Favorite Beaten,"—"Lost by a Head"—"Left at the Post," or "Also Ran." Once at Sheepshead Bay, I attended six days in succession, put a fiver on every race, wagered in every way known to the knowing ones, and never picked a winner once.

Like son so was father. Willis Barnabee was a good loser. After his riches took wings, he set out to be an inn-keeper. For twenty-four years he ran the old Franklin House, Portsmouth's leading hostelry, with its big mast and swinging signboard in front, dating back to the Revolution. Mother was cook, and I waited on table and helped tend bar.

Remember those were the good old days of the provincial tavern and the tri-weekly Boston mail coach. Dinner cost a quarter of a dollar, with a choice three-cent cigar, dry as tinder, thrown in. The bar,

though small, was supplied with most of the plain poisons in vogue today, except that nut-brown ale occupied the place of our new-fangled lager beer of today.

Although I alternated bar-tending in my leisure hours with attending school on week days and singing in the church choir on Sundays, I never then or subsequently acquired the habit either of drinking or of smoking.

And here let me say earnestly, as regards my individual self, that to my lifelong abstinence from tobacco, compulsory though it may have been, I attribute the preservation of my voice, which at seventy-seven is as strong and sonorous today throughout its full register as it ever was.

Chapter III

HISTORIC INNS AND OLD HOMES

STORIES TOLD IN THE FRANKLIN TAPROOM.—OTHER TAVERNS.—FIRST ORGANIZED RESISTANCE TO KING GEORGE.—NEW HAMPSHIRE SOLDIERS VS. MASSACHUSETTS HISTORIANS.

"An old home is like an old violin, the music of the past is wrought into it."—Catherine Sedgwick.

THE Franklin House, my home for many years, was originally a dwelling house built about the opening of the Nineteenth Century. After being converted into a tavern it became known as the Portsmouth Hotel and general stage-office.

A Portsmouth historian has entered the following note in his story of the famous inns of my native town: "The late Willis Barnabee, who had, as one of the most famous of the Eastern Stage Company's drivers, an acquaintance with everyone travelling between Bangor and New York, took the house in 1838 and changed the name to the Franklin House. Mr. Barnabee, like many other drivers, seeing the occupation of his early years likely to cease, leased the hotel, which was just across the street from his residence. After Mr. Barnabee took the Franklin it was the daily scene of bustle and local interest.

In Mr. Barnabee's day the bill of fare was, as were the viands, in plain English. Travellers had no time or inclination to translate French phrases on the *menu*, but attacked the dinners with a relish hardly known in these effeminate days. Mr. Barnabee's career in the Franklin continued to his death in 1862.*

In 1823, the historic inn was the scene of the great ball on the two hundredth anniversary of the first settlement of New Hampshire. Nearly four hundred were present. Grandsires and grandmothers, we are told, danced in the same sets with their children and grandchildren—and in the numerous ancient portraits, by the best masters, which covered the walls on every side, the representatives of the past centuries seemed to be mingling with their descendants on the joyous occasion.

The majority of the "400" present on that occasion inscribed their names and ages on a parchment roll, and we notice among the many signatures those of Grace and Daniel Webster, Mary and Jeremiah Mason, the Wendells, the Sheafes, the Wentworths and other "who's who" in the town at that time.

On September 21, 1824, the Marquis Lafayette held

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* Mr. Barnabee's mother, widow of the late Willis Barnabee, died on August 25, 1885, aged 86 years, 1 month and 10 days.

"Her long connection with the old Franklin House gave her a wide-spread reputation, as her genial and lovely character brought her a large circle of appreciative friends and personal acquaintances. Soon after the death of her esteemed husband in January, 1862, she left the charge of the Franklin House and resided with her children in Portsmouth and Boston." —*Portsmouth Journal.*

—Editor.

a reception in "ye leading hotel," at which thirty veteran soldiers of the Revolution who had served under him were present.

As I remember the Franklin, the place in which I began my very humble boyhood, it had a fine dance hall and many a night, from "sundown" to "sun up" did I exhibit my superior accomplishments in the terpsichorean art. It used to be the meeting-place for heroes. Statesmen, soldiers, sailors, divines and tradesmen who had contended valiantly for country, state or city used to congregate there to discuss the "topics of the day."

And there were serious problems to be solved in those days; vital questions to be discussed and settled; but on more than one occasion when argument was provoking contention, the keg of humor was tapped. Merriment and laughter held full sway, and patriotic toasts and non-intoxicating beverages made the rounds.

I remember several stories which were told in that "hall of fame," and I am going to relate them just as they were told to me. The first is one in which Commodore Perry, "the hero of Lake Erie," distinguishes himself as the blanketer of some blank talk.

Veterans of the War of 1812 were still fighting their battles over again in the tavern taproom. An admiring chronicler, possibly some future historian, now of the already forgotten past, asked the gallant commander, in the presence of his signal officer, if he could recall

any notable saying or order that had fallen from his lips at that memorable crisis.

"I don't know," mused the Commodore, turning to Lieutenant ———, "Can you remember anything in particular that I said?"

"No, sir,— not unless, when you ordered a certain vessel into action—but—"

"Well, what did I say then?"

"You said—begging your pardon, sir—you said, 'Blank it, why doesn't the blankety-blank blank go in? Tell him to go in, d—n him! Is he a d——d coward?'"

"Hold on, sir," interrupted the hero, smiling faintly, "we'll get my order-book. That will show."

They got the order-book, and the official record of what Commodore Perry said on that great and glorious occasion was reported to be only this, and nothing more:

"Please move forward."

But Daniel Webster was a greater and more impressive human presence in the old Franklin House Taproom than any of his contemporaries, or successors. The best stories were always about him, and almost invariably hinged upon his notorious indiscretions in the matter of over-conviviality. Some of these anecdotes, for sufficiently obvious reasons, never got beyond the currency of oral tradition. Others have been judiciously edited, and passed into print. One which I had from original hearers may possibly have escaped general publicity.

The noble Daniel, as everybody knows, was generous before he was just. He was readier to help others out of debt than to discharge his own obligations. He would remember a friend in need, and borrow money of a third party to relieve that friend's necessity, and then forget to repay the party of the third part. Hence, chronic financial embarrassment.

On one notable anniversary Daniel Webster was called upon to "say something" on five different topics, of more or less specific gravity. The last and weightiest was "The National Debt." It was late, and the banquet had already passed the "walnuts and the wine" stage, when the mighty Daniel arose wearily for his culminating outburst of oratory. Thrusting one hand into the expansive bosom of his coat, he stood there in his familiar Jove-like attitude, trying to think what his subject was supposed to be.

"The National Debt," whispered the toastmaster, prompting him.

With superhuman dignity, the New England Demosthenes pulled himself together, and in deep organ-tones spake thus:

"And now we come, my fellow-citizens, to that momentous consideration, the National Debt. The National Debt, gentlemen, the National Debt"—fumbling in his waistcoat pocket—"why, d— it, I'll pay it myself!"

Unfortunately he didn't have the amount with him at that moment.

It was at the door of the old Cutts House that Paul Revere delivered several dispatches during the sunrise of American liberty. On December 13, 1774, the fearless Paul made his *first* historic ride, which led to the attack on Fort William and Mary.

"The seizure of arms and powder at Fort William and Mary," (now Fort Constitution) says a historian, "was the *first capture* made by the Americans in the war of the Revolution."

We all know about the Boston Tea-Party, which occurred on December 16, 1773, when men disguised as Indians made a huge teapot of Boston Harbor by breaking open the chests and emptying the contents into the frigid waters of the Harbor. But few of us know much about the *first organized resistance* to King George's *armed* authority.

On December 14, 1774, four hundred determined Portsmouth men, carefully organized, and through previous arrangement, went to his Majesty's strongly fortified castle, "William and Mary," at the mouth of the Piscataqua River—forcibly took possession of it, in spite of the brave defense of Captain Cochran and his men, locked up the garrison in the fortress and carried away upwards of 100 barrels of powder belonging to the King. It was then and there that the British flag was pulled down for the *first* time, and with pride I add by the men of my own native city.

The following day—Thursday, December 15th—the Portsmouth men again went to the front, and, as

Governor Wentworth wrote to Governor Gage of Massachusetts, "brought off many cannon and about sixty muskets."

The true state of affairs being exposed by his Majesty's agent, the official was not backward in closing his communication with the words—"the town is full of armed men who refuse to disperse." And further in another communication, Governor Wentworth wrote:

"No jail would hold them (the offenders) long and no jury would find them guilty; for, by the false alarm that had been raised throughout the country, it is considered by the weak and ignorant, who have the rule in these times, an act of self-preservation."

The powder taken from the fort was afterwards used at Bunker Hill, where, as you will remember, it was very much needed. Pardon my enthusiasm, but did you know that one-half of the total number of soldiers engaged at Bunker Hill were from New Hampshire?

My friend, Mr. Carpenter, has said, "The Massachusetts men have written histories, and with exaggerated ego and natural conceit, have minimized the participation of New Hampshire in the important events in Colonial and Revolutionary times." This may be a little harsh, but the way in which Massachusetts has forgotten the affairs of those early days sometimes reminds one of that story told concerning Ethan Allen, the hero of Ticonderoga.

It is recorded that shortly after his victory, Ethan

was attending church. The minister gave thanks to Providence for the result and dwelt at length upon the goodness of the Almighty in accomplishing it. He went on ascribing the entire glory of the affair to Providence, and finally Ethan could stand it no longer, and jumping up said, "Won't you please mention the fact that Ethan Allen was there?"

Mr. Carpenter has well said that it has always been found that the patriotic spirit is strongest in those places where the people are brought most intimately into relations with the land—with the soil—a part of the courage and patriotism of the ancient Greeks was due to this cause. New Hampshire's chief glory is its scenery—its mountains, lakes and rivers—and these are never forgotten no matter where a son of New Hampshire may go. They are always present in his mind, a part of his life, his memory, and he always hopes to some time see them again.

Chapter IV

SCHOOLDAYS

"For backslidings, a plentiful store,
For follies of various degrees,—
Ye long suffering masters of yore,
Forgiveness we ask on our knees!

—James T. Fields.

REV. THOMAS STARR KING once said, "It makes no difference where we were babies, for then, wherever our residence may be, our only home is our mother's arms; the great question is, where were we boys?"

Having outgrown my long dresses, I was not long in reaching the second of Shakespeare's seven ages, and certainly my dear mother, standing in the doorway of the old home, watched her baby, Henry Clay, as

> The whining schoolboy, with his satchel
> And shining morning face, creeping like snail
> Unwillingly to school.

But before I snatch from oblivion a few reminiscences of my schooldays, I must relate the incident that caused this salvage to be so fragmentary.

My father, a lover and owner of horses, early conceived the idea of teaching me to ride. Nature, it seems, had scarcely designed me for a dashing trooper, but father ignored this. During my first lessons he

had me strapped on a horse's back, and I made quite a hit prancing about the streets of the town, seemingly with the seat of a centaur. But mine was the pride that proverbially goeth before a fall. On an evil day, I sallied forth unstrapped, and, of course, encountered some boys with fish-poles, one of whom, by accident or design, struck my erstwhile safe and gentle steed. The next minute I found myself astride a tornado. Later, I was picked up, stunned and battered. Memory, so far as the preceding incidents of my childhood were concerned, abruptly vacated its seat, and "like the baseless fabric of a vision," left scarce "a rack behind."

With the exception of doing penance, *once only*, at William Muldoon's health-restoring academy, in company with the proprietor, keeping my weather eye on William all the while—and the few times I took my life in my hands in the un-comic opera of "Don Quixote," I have never been on the back of a horse, and I pledge my fortune and sacred honor I will never trust myself on the back of any horse again, unless he is lame, blind and hitched.

This reminds me that my entire history from childhood has been punctuated with a series of terrific tumbles. Providence must have specially detailed a guardian angel to watch over me. Shortly after my equestrian accident, I played truant to attend the launching of a ship, and fell through a hatchway from the deck to the bottom of the hold, some thirty or forty feet. A pile of shavings saved me that time.

Years later, while playing "Don Quixote," the whole front scene went down with a crash. I was at the top of a tall ladder, but survived the dive.

One day a truck laden with hogsheads of molasses backed up at a corner grocery adjoining my father's hotel. By some carelessness of the drayman, one of them fell heavily upon the sidewalk and burst open. Before it could be righted, about half of the contents were meandering, a sluggish, swollen stream, down the walk.

At wonderfully short notice, all the boys of the neighborhood came swarming like honey-bees, with all sorts of implements for scooping up molasses. I, being then all legs and arms, jumped up and leaned far over the edge of the big barrel itself—too far, in fact, as I lost my balance and fell in head first.

By an irony of fate, I was rescued by the keeper of the shop, but was lost from society for the balance of that day. How many layers of soap it took to clean me, I know not; yet I often am inclined to think, in self-flattery and without regret—that some of the sweetness then so plentifully distributed over me has stuck to my disposition ever since.

I have needed it, often. Let me repeat, that in all my public life I have never done anything deliberately. Every step, from my first recitation of "Parrhasius"—which I shall recount later—to my *mis*-step and disappearance from vaudeville, has been the result of accident. The force of circumstance has thrown me

into whatever I have been mixed up in, always sans preparation or forethought.

Again I digress, as usual, but life, with me, is made up chiefly of digressions. I was about recalling old schooldays in Portsmouth. Thomas Bailey Aldrich has done the same thing, inimitably, in *his* way, in his "Story of a Bad Boy"—the Tom Bailey of that book being, of course, himself.

The snowball fights on Slatter's Hill, the "Pope Night" pranks, with horns and jack-o'-lanterns, on the fifth of November—a direct survival of the colonial English observance of the Guy Fawkes anniversary; the fierce vendetta between the boys of the South End of the town, and the North-enders—all these, and many more of Aldrich's chapters, are vivid realities to me.

Especially do I remember "Pope Night" and the natural vindictiveness which, like appetite, "grows by what it feeds on." We never knew or cared what the celebration was about except that it was evidently intended as an excuse for raising—his Satanic Majesty—and making night hideous, which we did, stopping short only at the blowing up of houses in imitation of that historic personage, Guido or "Guy Fawkes."

When night closed in on the hullabaloo, we assembled on the Parade, in the center of the town, for the purpose of meeting the enemy. At a given signal, the contending columns, disregarding all tactics, made a rush for the opposing forces, hurling our pumpkin

lanterns at each other until they were all squashes. There were never any casualties that soap and water could not cure, but in the morning what should have been a gory field looked like a rich yellow sunset.

The pathetic passages, too, are bits of real Portsmouth history. You remember his allusions to the sad fate of poor Binny Wallace who drifted out to sea in a dory? It suggests the departure of an elder brother of mine, Willis Barnabee, Jr., who went to sea and never returned. I was a little fellow at the time, and had a big chum named Tom Clapham, who, like Steerforth in "David Copperfield," took me under his wing. He proved more than a friend—he became "my guide, philosopher and friend." He made my kites and flew them for me. He tinkered up my toys and became their master. On Pope night he would take the biggest and yellowest pumpkin—that golden extract of summer and sunshine—procurable in the neighborhood and convert it into a lantern that outdid in hideous horror the most lurid caricatures of "yellow journalism."

Then suddenly, when the gold fever of '49 broke out, Tom Clapham in his turn ran away to sea; and his fate, like that of my brother Willis, remained a lifelong mystery—almost.

Here, thirty years are supposed to elapse, as we say on the stage. But in 1890 I was on my first visit to California, and in the lobby of the Baldwin Hotel, San Francisco, a gentleman approached me and says:

"Mr. Barnabee, there's an old fellow tending door at a dance-saloon not far from here, who says he knows you. I forget his name, but he claims that you and he were boyhood pals. Every night he begs, borrows or steals a quarter, and goes up into the gallery of the theater to see you play. Do you know him?"

"Not unless his name is Tom Clapham," I replied.

"That's it!" the gentleman answered.

So I went to look poor Tom up, and with great difficulty found him, sick, and living in a garret. I played the good samaritan for the time, and during the remainder of my stay in 'Frisco, we had glorious times telling each other everything that had happened since. The next time I visited 'Frisco, some three years later, dear old Tom was dead.

It may or may not have been with a "shining morning face" that I approached the grammar schoolhouse where that stern disciplinarian, Mr. Timothy G. Senter, wielded the primitive ferule; but there can be no doubt whatever that I "crept like a snail, unwillingly."

The other boys had more playtime than I did, on account of my duties at home—I still remember with a heavy heart how I had to shell peas on a Fourth of July.

My first serious "run-in" with Schoolmaster Senter would be hard to forget. I was at the foot of my class, as usual, and he started at the head, asking each pupil in succession the formidable question, "How many Gods are there?"

"Two," answered the first boy, thinking to be on the safe side. The teacher frowned him down.

"Three," the next boy ventured, making matters still worse.

By the time it got down to me, I concluded the other fellows had not been half liberal enough with their deities. So I shouted out "Ten!"

Zip! came the ferule at my head. I dodged it, and flew like the wind toward home and safety. Some distance up the road I met another small boy, who was coming to school.

"Say, how many Gods are there?" I asked him.

"One," was his reply.

"Well, you'd better not go to old Timothy G. with your one God," I cautioned him, "for he was just going to thresh the life out of me, and I made it ten."

In the basement of our school there was an old, disused safe, which had belonged to the bank formerly occupying the premises. We used it for a wood bin. One day, making the punishment to fit some juvenile offense or other which I had committed, the teacher shoved me into the iron coop, and then forgot me and went home to dinner.

I could have walked out at will, as there was no combination lock on the jail door. But, with my outraged feelings, I wanted to get back at the teacher; so I never budged for more than two hours, during which time my parents sent out an alarm, and even got the town crier on the job searching for me. When my

cruel gaoler at last bethought himself of my whereabouts, I was found sitting doggedly in my cage, elbows on knees, a living picture of martyrdom.

My propensity for fun couldn't be repressed. It came out in my lessons and recitations. Often I would give burlesque solutions to problems, and also, I regret to say, at Sunday school would paraphrase verses of the Bible. When called upon to "speak a piece," I usually delivered myself of some absurd travesty, perhaps elaborately prepared for the occasion, which always provoked laughter.

One original effort of mine at the time of the Mexican War, when our New England volunteers went South wearing enormous bearskin caps and ridiculous little monkey-jackets, ran as follows:

"Our volunteers to war have gone—
On the Rio Grande you'll find them,
With bearskin caps their heads upon,
And no coat-tails behind them."

My day of reckoning at school came with examination. It was my custom on those dread occasions to "cram" prodigiously, and then trust to luck and my wits to carry me through. Here is what happened to me in the high-school grade geometry class, when the Rev. Andrew P. Peabody, pastor of the Unitarian Church and chairman of the School Committee, conducted a general demonstration of the principles of Euclid on the blackboard.

Each student drew a problem to work out, accord-

ing to his number in the class. Mine was No. 34, and I got the shortest and simplest example of the bunch. But Dr. Peabody, suspecting that the boys had learned their Euclid by rote, without any real understanding, quietly changed the letters of the problems written on the board, before we began to "demonstrate." This balled up the boys frightfully, and at the same time gave me fair warning; for while they were floundering, I perceived the little trick which had been played, and, tranquilly opening the book, was enabled to absorb the true inwardness of my own problem, and to show why it should be "thisly and thusly," despite the juggled A. B. C's. This won me instantaneous *Kudos* as a geometrical shark, which I could never afterwards live up to.

That same day in the physiology class, the embarrassing question was put: "What is the name of the fluid which separates our bones?" The correct answer was: synovia, or joint-water—but I didn't know that, so I bawled out confidently, "Elbow-grease!" And that was accepted by my teacher and classmates as an original substitute for science.

But these academic experiences were only a part, and a minor part at that, of my real schooling. In my chores and daily life about the hotel, where the village worthies assembled and all sorts of travelers came, I was learning something every minute.

I was absorbing experience, unconsciously studying character, taking in wit, wisdom, wise "old saws, and

modern instances" enough to last a lifetime much longer than mine.

My dear mother, an energetic little woman wrapped up in household duties and the care of seven children, was still able to exercise a general beneficent control over this home part of my education. But she couldn't quite inoculate me against "swear-words." They were in the very air we breathed. Mild cussedness was then the fashion in our set, and "Hades" and "demnition" peppered every phrase.

"Oh, Henry! Wherever did you learn that wicked word?" I can still hear her saying. And my own flippant reply, which I now recall in humble penitence and remorse:

"Darned if I know, mother—unless it was in that story pop told, coming back from church."

Among our regular boarders were an upright judge and a learned pedant, both of whom were possessed of vocabularies of the most flamboyant fluency. They were forever talking, and whether the subject was crops, the weather, morals, politics or religion, their conversation was so interlarded with oaths that it was impossible to repeat any of their remarks or stories without at least a suggestion of profanity.

The learned pedant is responsible for the finale of the following historic incident of which I myself was a gleeful eye-witness: On the rise of the hill road leading to the cemetery was pastured a large, able-bodied, long-horned and cantankerous billygoat. It

was the joy of us boys, after school, to go and tussle with Billy, two or three of us at a time holding him by the horns and frustrating his best efforts as a battering-ram. This proceeding naturally infuriated him, so that after we got through, anybody or anything passing that way had to fly precipitately, or else bear the brunt of the billygoat's wrath.

One Saturday afternoon, just after one of our goat-wrestling matches, a funeral procession hove in sight, winding slowly and solemnly up the hill. In those days, carriages were rarely used on such occasions, and everybody was afoot. Just as they reached the top of the hill, out of breath with their climb, Capricornus broke loose, came down on that cortege like "the wolf on the fold," went for the head mourner and knocked the whole d—n funeral down hill.

One incident of my childhood has survived the lapse of time; and as it seemed to foreshadow the sense of humor with which a generous public and the partiality of friends has later credited me, I will relate it here.

During one of my father's tri-weekly visits to Boston, he learned the secret of a drink then much in vogue, composed principally of beaten eggs with decidedly alcoholic ingredients. Whether it was the combination known to the present generation as egg-nogg which, in the multiplicity of seductive concoctions, has long ago passed into the list of back-number drinks, I cannot tell. But my father gave it that

name, and it was new to the innocent inhabitants of Portsmouth.

One evening when my parents were to give a party, "egg nogg" was to be the *piece de resistance* of the refreshments. To insure promptness at the time of mixing the compound, the eggs previously prepared were placed in a wooden dish, in a cool and sequestered place. As a special favor, I was allowed to sit up—but as refreshments, after the usual hours, were more alluring to the youthful mind than the mature attractions of the parlor, I lingered near the kitchen to watch the preparations for the delectation of the appetites sharpened by the prolonged evening entertainment.

While the guests were assembling in the supper room, my father came to the kitchen to mix the mysterious and delicious compound. He took the dish containing the principal ingredient and turned to place it on a table, when a serving man, passing hurriedly, struck his arm, and in a second a yellow lake with numerous tributaries and rivulets inundated the kitchen floor.

That was my "message to Garcia." Seizing a feather duster which hung near, I rushed to the banquet room, "blazing with light and breathing with perfume," mounted a chair, waved the microbe disturber aloft to attract attention, and yelled in my childish voice:

"Ladies and 'Entlemen, you can't have any egg nogg, cos father's spilt all the lemon eggs."

It is needless to add, I was yanked from my perch, conducted upstairs in a hurry and put into my couch, with a *slippery* prelude. That was my first and last home-appearance at evening functions.

One of the Draconian laws governing my father's household was that I should be in bed and asleep by 10 o'clock P. M. One moonlit summer's night I was in swimming with my mates at the Navy Yard Slip, and by reason of various "stumps" and "stunts," did not get out and dressed until the town clock struck the witching hour of eleven. Did I hurry home? Oh, no, perhaps not! When I reached there the side door was locked, and the fearsome alternative presented itself of either waking my father or clambering in by stealth. I chose the latter. My parents' bedroom was at one end of the hall, mine at the other. The door of my room swung back and made a little alcove where there was a window. My! If I only could! I raised the sash gently and fastened it up. Then I removed my shoes, my cap and jacket and lowered them softly to the floor. One long leg, then the other, over the sill—I picked up my clothes, chuckled to think how easy it all was, pushed the door gently back and—*there stood my father, in his night-dress*, where he had been watching the whole burglarious proceeding. He looked ten feet high, stern and silent as a monument. Not a word was spoken, but he gave me such a look and vanished. My own exit from the scene was accomplished with equal celerity. But that look of

father's was a silent warning that lasted me through the swimming season.

How often, in after years, has that scene recurred to me, sometimes in situations bordering on the tragic; and I have realized that *silence* can be many times stronger than words.

If I were to lengthen this chapter, I am afraid I would have to appear in the character of the bad boy and recite some of the laughable experiences of school life, which, though they might be fun for you, would be anything but pleasant memories to my old and respected teachers.

I beg my instructors, however, to believe that the spirit of fun which so exercised them was but the germ of that talent, which in later years, if it has not done anything for the world's advancement, has, at least, effected something to disseminate the gospel of cheerfulness. Let me assure them, too, that I recall how often during the morning of my life they had told me that I should one day thank them for their teachings, for their sternness of discipline, and even for the occasional whippings which I now see were less frequent than I deserved. As a sentiment, I offer the one given at the reunion of the graduates and members of my old High School in 1873:

"*Our Teachers:* Sometimes blessings in disguise. Our chastenings only furnished momentary clouds, that had their golden lining. In the light of after sunshine, we honor them for their fidelity, respect them for their stern virtues;

and trust their teachings. Their eloquent appeals, which detained us many half-hours beyond school hours, and their infrequent use of the rod have had the effect to make us better men and women, stronger in self-control, with loftier aims and aspirations. May they be forever blessed!

Chapter V

FIRST STEPS

MY FIRST APPEARANCE ON THE STAGE.—FIRST ATTEMPT TO SING.—FIRST DANCING LESSONS.—PATTI'S FIRST AMERICAN TOUR.—FIRST MALE GLEE CLUB.—FIRST DAYS BEHIND THE COUNTERS.

"Fust appearances are ced to be everything. I don't put all my faith into this sayin'; I think oysters and clams, for instance, will bear looking into."—Josh Billings.

PRECEDING by many long years my first step into the life of the theater, my first appearance on any stage was in my native town, and though it showed no signs of histrionic ability or especial genius it certainly developed my taste and my fun-loving propensity.

It was at a fair held under the auspices of one of the church societies. And what a fair it was. It was given in the place of all places—Portsmouth's only convenient assembly-room—Jefferson Hall. I remember the old hall where the townsmen met in the annual town meeting when we elected the Selectmen, or the State election of the Governors, the M. C.'s and the Presidents; and on many such occasions have I witnessed, when political feeling ran at high water mark, a gathering of excited partisans that was anything but a love feast.

In the tableaux vivants I filled the position of author and stage manager. I induced three of the young ladies of the Society—and who were also the handsomest—to assist me. By consent of a fond mother, I was able to present a little white cherub, in tights and gossamer wings, as Cupid. The scene was rural. I made a mound with the relics of barrels and dry goods boxes, covered it with green mats, and had the three young ladies recline on the improvised structure, in the act of rapturously beholding and enticing the cherub to favor their loves. When the curtain rose on "Cupid caught by the Graces" the applause was uproarious, the curtain calls prolonged, and my reputation as a gentleman of taste, refinement, elegance and skill firmly established. The participants in that picture have since passed away, I trust to the glories of heaven, but the remembrance of that graceful child and the beautiful young faces and figures is still mine, and will remain with me while memory holds its seat.

The next tableau was devised by a rival of mine in musical circles. He suggested a Biblical picture. "Belshazzar's Feast" was thought the most proper and effective, especially as he, as Belshazzar, would occupy the center of the stage. And by the way, in after years, I never could understand the feverish desire of actors and singers to occupy that central position whenever there was the slightest chance of obtaining it. They felt that they must have it to convince the audience that they were "It," forgetting that the

center of interest is always the locality occupied by the *real* artist. This propensity on the part of participants in a performance had its illustration in the "Passion Play" at Oberammergau, when I was an observer in the year 1900. I may relate it later.

Well! to resume! In this particular tableau at the fair I was relegated to a position in the left hand corner of the stage, my supposedly ruffled feelings soothed by a gorgeous covering of "togs" becoming the chief courier, and which would make me, in the "taffy" offered me by the "pretender to the throne" the "cynosure" of all eyes. I did not tumble to the compliment, however.

The "Belshazzar" of our show in his daily occupation had a knack of making transparencies, and in the windows of the shop which he kept, open-work letters, illumined with candles and lamps, were constantly appearing. On this occasion to properly present the "handwriting on the wall," he procured a large raisin box from the corner grocery, and knocking out one side of it and substituting in open-work letters the dreaded words—

. . . MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN

in good straight English, it was thought, by the corps dramatique, to be very impressive.

When the curtain began to ascend and the underpinnings and costumes of the "artists" presented themselves the applause was tumultuous, but when the

anticipated transparency appeared there was a shriek of laughter which rattled the windows. The curtain was rung down, consternation was on every face, what *was* the matter? A hurried investigation disclosed the fact that in the hurry of getting the picture posed and the curtain started, some *unhallowed* hand had turned the transparency box around, when instead of:

MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN

there appeared these cabalistic words:

FRESH RAISINS—TWENTY CENTS A POUND.

The culprit was never discovered, but if there are any living besides myself who were in that cast they have never forgotten the night when they dined with Belshazzar and had "Fresh Raisins" on the side.

Without premonition to guide me, or education to direct, I have accomplished or failed in the undertakings of my life, as previously noted, mainly through accident or chance. The words "fate" and "destiny" are sometimes applied to that mysterious power which "shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will." Were I writing about someone else, and not of myself, I might say that in this connection the term "genius" has also been employed.

But genius never taught any human being how to dance. Even the genius has to learn the two or waltz-step from a dancing-master, if he learns it at all. My distinguished friend, Col. Henry Watterson, once paid me the compliment which I cling to the more fondly

because it was unmerited—of declaring that I was "the most graceful man on the American stage." This is how I account for having given him such an impression:

In the middle '40's, a French dancing-master came to Portsmouth, and started a class which used to meet in the parlor of our hotel. This dancing-class was a very swell affair, exclusively for the Brahmin caste, or smart set, of our town. In fact, it was so extremely exclusive that it failed.

The French master stayed at our house and taught us kids for his board. From him I learned the rudimentary one-two-three, four-five-six of the waltz, polka and mazurka, and the (then) latest in Parisian quadrilles. Where no book-study nor mental exertion was required, I proved an apt pupil.*

* Touching on Mr. Barnabee's ability as a dancer, the late Jessie Bartlett Davis, favorite songstress of the "Bostonians," used to delight in telling the following story. It's a true story and worthy of repetition:

"The Bostonian Company was staying at the Iroquois Hotel, Buffalo. The dining-room has a tiled floor, and one of Mr. Barnabee's weaknesses is dancing on tiles, particularly when they are a little loose. Mrs. Barnabee, my sister, and I were at breakfast and waiting for him. It was his first appearance in the restaurant, and about sixty people were having their coffee or lunch when he came in. Well, the moment he stepped on the floor, a tile or two gave, and the impulse that seized him set his feet flying and I never saw him dance better. His wife knew that if she tried to stop him he would persist just to tease her, and so she smiled and said nothing, but frowned whenever he looked our way. The head waiter thought he was crazy until he began to sing jig music and dance round him. The guests put down their knives and forks and laughed and applauded while their coffee and chops got cold. When he had gone over the floor and had all the fun he wanted with the loose tiles, he stopped, seated himself and ate his breakfast with all the affected severity and mannerisms of a senior vestryman."

The Victoria *Daily Colonist* throws a bouquet at Mr. Barnabee's feet when it says:—"He dances with the vivacity of a front row ballet girl."—Editor.

What I learned most easily I have longest retained, and it has proved of incalculable value to me throughout my professional career. When beginners ask my advice about studying for the stage, whether lyric or dramatic, I always urge them to go in for dancing and fencing, the first thing.

The chapter about my early musical training is much shorter: I never had any.

Israel P. Kimball, teacher in the High School at Portsmouth, was a leading tenor in the church choir, and also ran a singing-school. It was through his friendly influence that I droned along with the hymns in the old Unitarian church. Because I liked him, and because he discerned in me hidden qualities which neither I nor any one else suspected, I was induced to attend his singing classes, and to diligently con the sol fa.

I learned it, after a fashion, by rote, or by ear. But I never really got it through my head so as to read musical notation in the ordinary, conventional, civilized way. Doubtless it will scandalize the gentle or savage reader who glances over these rambling pages because I have won his friendly interest as a singer in comic or serio opera.

Nevertheless, the sad fact remains that if, today, he were suddenly to place before me the score of "Robin Hood," or "Pinafore," or "Fra Diavolo," I couldn't for the life of me tell whether a given note was A or G, or what key it was in. At the same time, I could sing

it correctly, or any unfamiliar piece of music, though I should prefer to hear it played over once on the piano, so as to get started right on the tempo, and that sort of thing.

The celebrated Mme. Rudersdorff, who was one of the finest dramatic and *coloratura* singers I ever knew, once said to me, when I confided to her this peculiarity:

"Never mind; you are all right. That's the true method of singing at sight, anyway. The best of them don't really know anything about music, more than that—if they know as much."

I always liked that woman.

The combination of singing in the church choir and taking dancing lessons at home, while at the same time absorbing Yankee character-study in large doses through my everyday duties about the hotel, produced through my erratic and fun-loving temperament some strange and startling results. In the amateur entertainments organized by local talent at the town Cameneum, and at the Temple, I began to figure among those present on the miniature stage or platform. Singing in the chorus was my specialty as I developed early a sort of rumbling subway vocal organ effect, which subsequently I learned was a basso profundo, with a baritone range. I could black up as a darkey, play general utility man or "shouts outside" in amateur theatricals, and, with a body long, lank and lean, like "Darius Green of the flying machine," had the

reputation of being a highly decorative spearman or torch-bearer*.

Itinerant minor professional talent, such as Wiseman Marshall, the entertainer, occasionally visited Portsmouth, and I took in everything of that sort that came down the narrow way.

My most vivid musical recollection of this period is the visit of Adelina Patti, then a child wonder, aged eleven years. She was accompanied on this, her first, concert tour, by Maurice Strakosch, the pianist, who afterward married her elder sister, Amelia Patti; and Ole Bull, the great violinist. Little Adelina stood up on a hassock and warbled her fioritura aria from "La Sonnambula" with the full-throated ease of a bird.

Twenty-five years later, I heard her sing the same selection, in the same voice and manner—for she has been kept in cotton batting all her life, and, apparently,

* Darius Green! Who has not heard of Darius, the birdman? Mr. J. T. Trowbridge, who has lived to see even his humorous vision realized, said quite recently:

"When I wrote 'Darius Green,' I am afraid I took advantage of my poetic license when I made what little of prophecy I did make in the poem, for, frankly, I had no idea then that men would ever fly through the air—at least in my time."

In recalling his own experience with his famous poem, the aged writer pins a blue ribbon on Mr. Barnabee. Mr. Barnabee, as his records show, was capable of soaring for years to such altitudes with "Darius" that even the inventor of the original was forced from the course. Mr. Trowbridge's explanation to the public for withdrawing is as follows:

"I used to read it before gatherings of various kinds a good deal at one time. That was in the years following its publication. In fact, I rather liked to read it until one time I saw H. C. Barnabee recite it. Then I decided to stop reading 'Darius Green.' You see Barnabee could act and I couldn't, and it is a poem that requires some acting. Barnabee recited it as I would like to recite it. He gave it a spirit and a life that I couldn't. It was all in his acting—his facial expression and his gestures."—Editor.

has done little more than coddle the exquisite gifts with which Nature dowered her. I have a programme of this entertainment in which she also sang, "Oh, Luce di Quest' Anima," Madame Sontag's celebrated Cavatina by Donizetti, the Swiss "Echo Song," and the favorite Scotch Ballad -"Coming Thro' the Rye."

Later I kept the printed account of the appearance of Madame Henriette Sontag together with Paul Julien, the wonderful violinist, and Alfred Jaell, one of the first great pianists that visited American shores. Madame Sontag was a most brilliant coloratura soprano. Were she alive today, the Melbas, the Sembrichs and Tetrazzinis would have to hustle to compete with her. They are great memories to me, and I am thankful and grateful that I have heard them all.

Nothing could have been further from my own mind when I made my first step, than the idea that I had in me the making of a stage artist of any description whatsoever. A constitutional shyness, or mistrust of myself, in facing an audience, was a marked trait in my disposition then, and I have not by any means entirely lived it down and probably never will.

I have often been asked time and time again if I ever had stage fright. Have I ever had anything *but* stage fright? I have played the part of the "Sheriff of Nottingham" nearly nineteen hundred times and I cannot remember when I did not go on in a state of tremor and trepidation perfectly indescribable. Many and many a time I have called "Guy of Gisborne"

from his dressing room, and insisted upon going through the lines of our first entrance, and often, as I entered the wings to go on, I have shouted in an agony of fear—"For heaven sake! somebody! Give me the first line of my song! Quick!!!" and then I would walk on, with a "know it all" look that would encourage my helpers. I never forgot but once, and then I had the superhuman alertness and coolness, after looking up into the air for the missed line, to walk down to the first entrance, take the book from the prompter, and *read* it, to the intense amusement of the audience.

It has been said that an actor must be scared nearly out of his five senses to make him brace up and show what he is made of. If that is true, I must have done fairly well, for, with me, it was a case of "brace up" from first to last, though I kept it to myself, and the audience never "caught on." Hardly a night passes, even now, in which I do not have some dream of getting onto the stage not knowing what I was going to sing or say. Stage fright! Well, I do not believe there is any terror like it except, perhaps, the *first* march on to a field of battle or the walk to the chair of electrocution, and I cannot write of either of them, from experience.

I have said amateur entertainments were given in the *Cameneum*.* (Where did they get that name? I

* The Cameneum was originally a Universalist Church built in 1784. The Universalists occupied the building until 1808 when they decided to

never heard of it anywhere else, before or since.) At any rate, the Portsmouth Cameneum was a small public amusement hall, a short distance from the other temple dedicated to similar uses, rather primitive in its accommodations and adornments, yet with a certain citified air about it. Traveling combinations occasionally struck our town, and played there, with the aid of volunteer "supes" plentifully supplied from local talent.

One of these companies had the temerity to "present" that thrilling spectacular play from the "Arabian Nights," entitled, "Ali Baba; or the Forty Thieves." At that time the introduction of a four-legged animal on the stage was considered a novel and effective piece of business. So Ali Baba's entrance riding on a jackass caused quite a sensation. When not "on," the long-eared bearer of burdens put in the time browsing about back of the theater.

In the scene where Morgiana trips gaily from jar to jar wherein the thieves are concealed, and pours boiling oil on their helpless heads, eliciting a deep

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seek other quarters. Later, the Methodists being without a place of worship, decided to purchase the Cameneum, which they did, occupying the same until 1827. After that, the building was converted into a theater and lecture-hall. It was in 1831 that the building was re-opened to the public, and it was the Rev. Dr. Burroughs who, while delivering the opening address, gave it the name of the *Cameneum*. The name that learned divine derived from Camenae, the nymphs of the Sacred Springs at the Porta Capena of ancient Rome from whence the Vestal Virgins drew water for the Temple of Vesta. Later these nymphs became identified with the Greek Muses, and the Cameneum meant the Temple of the Muses. When Daniel Webster made his farewell visit to Portsmouth, May 17, 1844, he greeted his old friends here for a social evening. The long and eventful career of the structure was brought to a close in 1883, when it was destroyed by fire. —Editor.

groan from each, Balaam's friend suddenly took his cue. He raised a blood-curdling bray that shook the windows and lifted the audience out of their seats. There has been nothing so effective since in the annals of stagedom and only once since in the history of the real world, viz.:—the day on which a later-day reformer lifted the tops of some insurance jars and exposed to view the hidden "jacks." Then the groans of the gentlemanly robbers and the cries of the jackals could be heard all over *our* far East.

The untimely bray of Ali Baba's ass proved a "frost" for the poor beast—it nipped his dramatic career in the bud. Subsequently, I saw him reduced to pulling an applesass wagon. His was a case of descension instead of as(s)cension in the player's world.

About this time in my career the desire for public life and the laurels of artistic fame first began to gnaw at my vitals. We had organized a male glee quartette consisting of tenor, basso, soprano (falsetto), and contralto, and went about serenading wherever we thought the prospects of being invited in to partake of refreshments were most promising.

In general, our church-choir origin betrayed itself in the religious character of our selections, such as: "I love to steal (awhile away)," or that other anthem chosen with reference to the daily occupation of our drug-clerk member, which wound up with the refrain: "And take thy pill—and take thy pill—and take thy pilgrim home."

But when there were girls to be included among the innocent victims of our vocal raids we would choose some cheerful, sentimental ditty with words like these:

One year ago, when the sun was low,
Along with Elwin Alley,
To chat and talk they took a walk—
But she now sleeps in the valley.

Our concerted numbers were handled with fearful and wonderful symphonic effects, if you please; so that the concluding line of the above choice stanza would fall upon charmed ears in something like the following fashion:—

Bass—She now sleeps
Tenor—She now sleeps
Contralto—She now sleeps
Soprano—She now sleeps
All Together—She now sleeps i-i-in the
Barber Shop Chord—Val-l-l-l-ley!

Now wouldn't that make a birdie cry or a willow weep?

Is it any wonder that our club made a hit? So much so, that nothing would do but we must go "out" on the road, to let the country bumpkins know what a wealth of song had been slumbering in the old town by the sea, and incidentally to gather in the shekels that doubtless would be "ours" at the mere mention of our advent. We saw visions of four ambitious and deserving young men, heralded as the leading exponents of modern melody, lined up on the brilliantly

lighted stage, left hands in dress coat tail pockets, right hands resting on their manly chests or toying with plated watch-chains, the cynosure of admiring eyes, perchance the dream of palpitating maiden hearts, the while they filled the night with music, and their pockets with substantial rewards of merit.

Oh, it was entrancing—too entrancing to last. Parental discipline asserted itself, and I awoke. My father and mother would not hear of having their young Henry Clay exposed to the temptations and vicissitudes of garish stage life. Thus was my first impulse to flash as a wandering star rudely checked in its orbit.

But still there was the Cameneum, and there was the Temple, and there were long-suffering home folks upon whom to practice. I was already working in Jones' dry-goods house, so I could afford to do this sort of thing in the evening for Art's sake. Also, there was no end of fun in it.

One memorable night at the Temple, after our concert entertainments had gained some vogue, we had such a full house that seats had to be placed across the aisles, and the principal exits were blocked. I was on the stage singing "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," when suddenly, in the street outside, there arose a cry of "Fire," and the church bell began to clang. Immediately—in the twinkle of an eye—there was a commotion.

I stopped singing, and, raising my hand, cried out:

"If you will kindly keep your seats, I'll go and see where the fire is." With that I disappeared.

The commotion increased, and there was danger of the audience stampeding, when a Mr. Coffin, who had paid his good shilling for a front seat, arose, and, gesticulating wildly, in the most violent language, commanded the people to sit down, and not to make fools of themselves.

"Mr. Barnabee will return presently and tell us where the fire is," he repeated reassuringly.

(The vitality with which people generally can ventilate the conduct of their neighbors, and the lightning changes they can make when it's their own toes that are being stepped upon had a vivid illustration at this concert.)

Reappearing before the audience, I shouted:

"Ladies and gentlemen, the fire is in Mr. Coffin's paint shop!"

Mr. Coffin gave a wild yell and started for the door like an infuriated Texas steer. He scrambled over the tops of the benches and didn't hesitate to make use of heads and shoulders as stepping-stones.

To that portion of my life's voyage passed on the four decks of Wm. Jones & Son's dry goods emporium I have somewhat alluded. I was seasick the first day out, and wanted to go home. The fact that the stipendiary emoluments were not large made it all the more irksome. William Jones, the skipper, was a fine old New England Squire, with a weather eye

always open to the main chance. William P. Jones, the mate, I remember as a tall, spider-legged being with a keen, calculating eye that could make a yard and three-quarters of stuff look like two yards, and a bargain at that. The head clerk, also, was a lynx-eyed and sharp-set underling who always kept us after hours if he could.

On Cameneum nights, I would slip outside the store, take the shutter bolt from its hole, and through the latter give a good imitation of the whistling of the nor-northwest wind. Then the senior member of the firm would listen and say, "Come, boys, you may as well close up. It's too windy for any more customers tonight." You can imagine how surprised he was on leaving his store to find the night soft and balmy.

However, inasmuch as the Jones' emporium was the practical commercial training school of the town—and as I had acquired one of those Daniel Webster blue coats with brass buttons, and was beginning to make an appreciable impression on my best girl, as well as to be "in on" all the festivities that were on tap, I stuck to the ship for four long years and learned to handle silks and muslins as well as canvas. In recognition of honest service rendered, I was allowed the privilege to handle the money-bags, night and morning. The only caustic criticism administered to me when I unduly prolonged the lunch hour, was: "Henry is a good boy, but he needs a little red pepper on his heels."

Chapter VI

STILL LINGERING IN OLD "PORCHMOUTH"

A LIFELONG DESIRE.—MESSAGES FROM THE DEAD.—A SHOWER OF BEANS.—SOUR GRAPES.—THE FORBIDDEN PEAR.

"I hav finally cum tew the konklushun, if a man kant be born but once, he had better issue proposals tew hav it dun somewhare in Nu England."—Josh Billings.

THE conductors on the railway trains call out "Porchmouth!" to this day. It was, and is still, a dear old place, unlike any other. As I here approach, reminiscently, the time of the "parting of the ways," when I went to seek my fortune in Boston, a tidal wave of recollections sweeps over my memory, and it is not easy to decide which, if any, of the numerous amusing incidents of that period may appropriately be selected for preservation in this printed chronicle.

I remember vividly the great storm of 1851, the same which destroyed the Minot's Ledge Lighthouse. The raging sea rolled far inland over the meadows, and it was necessary to go miles around in order to reach the rock-ribbed strand whence could be viewed the terrible majesty of the Atlantic breakers, and a full-rigged brigantine driving ashore, and all her crew gallantly saved from the wreck. It was like that

immortal Yarmouth Roads chapter in Dickens' "David Copperfield." That sublime terror of the sea remained ever after in my thoughts as ill comporting with the jaunty, sailor-like air which I assumed in singing "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep."

In a direction northeast across the water from Fort William and Mary (now Fort Constitution) stands Whaleback Lighthouse, a sentinel warning of danger in every form.

If there is one place on this earth that I have never been in and that I have wanted to visit and to stay in over at least one night, it is a lighthouse. I have never been able to imagine anything so fascinating as to sit at the windows in perfect serenity and to watch the ocean ebb and flow and to note its varying moods of storm, wind and perfect calm—to watch the caressing waves as they foam upon the rocks as if to hold them in close embrace—in the moonlight, to see the heavenly orb as it emerges from the deep where the sky and the waters meet, and, as it rises, leaving a trail of crimson or silver over the ripples of the restless sea—and in the tempest, when the Supreme Will that "plants its footsteps in the sea and rides upon the storm," is manifesting His majestic strength and power, to see the gigantic waves as they come rushing with thundering roar and mighty force, as if to sweep the beacon light and its foundations into the caves of the ocean!—and through it all to feel the certainty that the light o'erhead was shining out over the angry

Josephine Bartlett, the Lady Superior in "The Serenade"

Marie Stone as Zerlina in "Fra Diavolo"

Jessie Bartlett Davis as the Indian Girl in "The Maid of Plymouth"

Isabella McCulloch as the original Little Buttercup in "Pinafore"

Alice Nielsen in "The Serenade"

Juliette Corden in "Mignon"

Agnes Huntington as Vladimir in "Fatinitza"

Adelaide Phillips the Peerless, as Vladimir in "Fatinitza"

Marie Stone as Lydia in "Fatinitza"

The Shillaber House
Home of the late B. P. Shillaber
(Mrs. Partington)

Haymarket Square

Warner House

Daniel Webster House

The Franklin House,
Tavern conducted by Mr. Barnabee's parents

Public Library

Old Jackson House

Governor John Wentworth House

Governor Langdon House

Buildings of historical interest located at Portsmouth, N. H., the birthplace of Henry Clay Barnabee

waters to warn the watchful mariners of danger. There is a sublimity in the whole picture, too deep for any painting.

An unknown friend, who must have known of my deep-seated partiality of such scenes, sent me an engraving of Whaleback Lighthouse, which has braved the elements that threaten the lower harbor of Portsmouth for many a long year. For years the picture has been with me in all my homes, and in its guardianship of the entrance to Piscataqua's swift tides, the beacon has been a constant reminder of my youth and many happy hours in the city by the sea. The engraving is now in the Public Library at Portsmouth, and I am very glad that it has, at last, found an abiding place.

"Off soundings"—or to be explicit, about nine miles from the outer harbor of Portsmouth, lies a small group of islands called "The Shoals." Many years ago, a Portsmouth editor, Thomas Laighton by name, after long years of unrewarded political service, grew sick and tired of the ingratitude of republics, bought himself one of the islands for a hermitage, and dwelt there ever afterward. His daughter, born in this isolated home, became Celia Thaxter, the poetess.

Laighton erected a building of rambling design, which he dignified with the title of *hotel*, and conducted as a chowder resort and miniature Coney Island. He was ponderously obese, as befitted a landlord; and, planted immovably in an armchair in his office, entered

the surnames of his guests on a slate, after asking, "What denomination?" which, it transpired, was a question of sex, and not of creed. He ran his house on the autocratic plan, ringing a bell on the roof as a signal for meals, regulating all accounts, and maintaining a general attitude of

"I am monarch of all I survey
My right there is none to dispute."

And may I add that one of the occasional visitors at the Shoals was the Rev. Dr. Parkman, a well-known divine, and a brother of Professor George Parkman, whose sensational murder by Professor Webster of Harvard College sent a thrill of horror throughout the world a few years previous to the time of which I am now writing. It was on Dr. Parkman that Laighton, the "Emperor of the Isles," used to tell one of his best stories.

It appears that the reverend gentleman's teeth were bad, so he went to Boston to a "gum architect." This dentist happened to be one of the pillars of an orthodox church, though neither he nor his patient knew of each other's religious calling and election. After the dental operation was over, the patient picked up a hand-mirror, looked at his devastated mouth, made a variety of facial contortions, then deliberately and more than once uttered aloud the sacred name of the Saviour.

The dentist strode up to the patient and said sternly: "Sir, if the work I have done on your teeth is not

satisfactory, say so, and I will make it right. But let me tell you that your blasphemous profanity I cannot and will not tolerate on my premises."

"My good friend," cried the mortified cleric, "I was not swearing. This is the first time in thirty years that I have been able to pronounce the name of our Blessed Redeemer without whistling."

While I was still a youth, spirit-rappings and table-tipping seances became the vogue, and here I attained the pinnacle of occult distinction—while it lasted. My modus operandi was unique, involving previous connivance and an elaborate code of signalling with confederates.

Nature, I should presume, has gifted me with peculiarly flexible joints of the fingers and toes, so that I can—at least, I could—dislocate them at will, and then audibly snap them back in place. We would gather about a round table, half a dozen wide-awake boys and girls, and summon spirits from the vasty deep, who would answer impertinent questions and tell us things which we already knew, by weird and unaccountable knockings, on the alphabetic plan.

My comrades of the Quartette were confederates who posted me on the little matters, mostly relating to sweethearts and the tender sentiment about which the girls put questions; while the responses were "snapped" out by my great toe, in a way that was positively uncanny.

One night, having "stood in" with a couple of my

chums to mystify a lively bunch of girls, we sat with our knees against the legs and supports of a dining-room table, and made it dance like a boat on a choppy sea. After a sufficient amount of awe had been inspired, the first question was asked:

"Are there any sperrits (spirits) present?"

Table uneasy (on-knees-y).

"Can you manifest yourselves in any other way?"

Rap, rap!—from Henry Clay's toe.

"How?" "Alphabetically?"

"Sure,"—or signals to that effect.

Then the circus began. We found the late stage-driver, old Sandy Marden,—he of such regularity in his stage trips that all the farmers along the route set their clocks by his movements—who told me of the young lady who had failed to pay him fare for the last time she had been a passenger in his 'bus, but that he would collect it when they should meet below. The deceased Mr. Dunyon, the ice-cream man, reminded a blushing young couple that two of his spoons had disappeared simultaneously, on a day when they had visited his parlor. Shaffer, the departed dancing-master, asked me if I was still keeping up my heel-and-toe practice! And the wraith of a river boatman declared that if he ever got me on the River Styx he would take it out of me for the boat I had hired of him on the day Daniel Webster visited Portsmouth, by giving me a row that would make "Pull-and-be-D—d Point" (a local Scylla and Charybdis) seem like still water!

On another occasion while we were awaiting the oracle's answer to the cryptic question, "Who struck Billy Patterson?" one of the boys gave my "snap" away by exclaiming—

"Girls and fellows, Henry Barnabee can answer that just as well with his lips as with his *toes!*"

This, all this, was more than fifty years ago. Yet, on a recent visit to Portsmouth I met an elderly lady who was one of the girls present on the memorable occasion just recalled, and who has never wearied of telling how the spirits "cut up" at that manifestation. I told her—what is, indeed, a painful fact—that overwork had so disabled my great toe that it was never right again, to this day.

Life at Portsmouth was prodigal of events. At one of our choir rehearsals, on a Saturday evening, when, of course, we all sported our best Sunday-go-to-meeting attire, a certain vivacious Miss H— surreptitiously filled the pocket-handkerchief of her beau with beans. The next morning, as this same beau, in his same store clothes that he had worn to the rehearsal, stood in the choir-loft while the congregation joined in singing "Sowing the Seed," or "Scatter Blessings from on High," he whipped out his silk handkerchief to dab his fevered brow. Presto! A hailstorm of beans fell on the heads of the devoted worshippers, as though a bounteous Providence were showering down a miraculous supply of Boston's favorite food.

Speaking of Boston and that "something to eat"

that has since made it famous, let me recall here my first, brief, but ever memorable visit to that wheel-hub 'round which the universal machine revolves. I had two weeks' vacation, and five dollars for spending money. Like Monte Cristo, the world was mine! To show what a game youngster I must have been, I will relate what a fearful and unforgotten "dent" was made in that "Five," the first day I struck town:

Passing a fruiterer's store on Washington Street, I saw some grapes that looked good to me. In Portsmouth, a *bunch* that size would cost a *shilling*. Here in Boston, I reckoned they would be dearer—perhaps *fifteen cents*, or even *twenty*. Never mind the expense—I wanted those grapes.

"How much does that bunch weigh?" I inquired of the clerk, with the air of a Lucullus.

"Pound and a half," he replied.

"I'll take it," said I, "if you can change this bill"—handing him my precious five-spot.

"That will be *Three Dollars—Pound and a half of Black Hamburg, Hothouse Grapes, at Two Dollars per pound*—three and one is four, and one is five. *Thanks!*"

You could have knocked me down with a feather. There was a momentary panic in my financial midst, but I rallied, and choking off the mad impulse to demand my money back, went out and ate those grapes, at an estimated cost of about *twelve cents per grape*. I also swallowed the lesson that went with them, but, like the grapes, it didn't last very long.

While speaking about fruit, it may not be out of place here to relate how in after years I was led astray by a pear. It seems Mrs. Barnabee and I were stopping down in the country. Next door to us there was a fine big orchard, which was under the constant surveillance of three wicked looking bulldogs.

From my window I had a splendid view of a big pear tree that had been stripped of its fruit the day before we arrived. One pear remained. It was without exception the finest, juiciest-looking pear I ever beheld at long range. I fell in love with that pear. So did Mrs. Barnabee. It was the old Adam and Eve story over again with a pear understudying the part of the apple. That pear made me feel like a boy again. I wouldn't have taken it as a gift at any price, but I'd have gone a mile out of my way to get it. I consulted with the cook of our establishment with regard to the habits of the bull dogs.

"Oh, the dogs won't hurt you so long as you call them by their names," she exclaimed. "With strangers they're apt to stand on ceremony, but so long as you call them 'Daisy,' 'Flossie' and 'Tootsie' they'll treat you well."

The cook led me to the window and gave me a long-distance introduction. Flossie I was to know by her milk-white left ear; Daisy was wall-eyed, and Tootsie was to be recognized by her formidable-looking countenance. I spent the rest of the day in the window, throwing bones to them and helping them to get

accustomed to my voice and features. As soon as it grew dark, Mrs. Barnabee helped to lower me over the fence.

I reached the tree without experiencing any canine demonstrations. Everything seemed lovely, particularly that pear. I scrambled up the trunk and reached out my hand to grasp the forbidden fruit, when, with a three-ply roar of the most awful significance to me, the three dogs made a dash for the foot of the tree. I could see Mrs. Barnabee in the window wringing her hands. But I hadn't time to pay attention to her. The dogs were howling like all possessed, and one of them was leaping up in the air to within an inch and a half of my foot. The instant the dogs appeared their names went out of my head. I made a speaking trumpet of my hands and shouted to Mrs. Barnabee:

"What's their names?"

"I can't remember," she shouted back. "I'll go and get the cook."

In ten minutes time Mrs. Barnabee came back and told me that it was the cook's night out. No one else in the house was on speaking terms with the dogs, so my wife asked if she should call a policeman.

"Certainly not," I shouted. "I don't want to get arrested as well as bitten. I'll try my soubrette vocabulary on the dogs."

So I set to work and called those infernal animals by every pet name that I ever heard of. I began with the chorus of our company, and went right through

the feminine roster. But it wasn't a bit of good. Then I tried fancy names, but it wasn't any better. By this time it was pitch dark. The only light on the question was the candle which Mrs. Barnabee had set in the window to cheer me up. Every now and then she would call out some suggestion and express a fear that I should be catching cold if I sat out there much longer. I sat on that infernal bough until 12 o'clock, when the cook returned and propitiated the dogs with a late supper. And the pear? Oh, well, never mind about it. I believe it's hanging there yet.

Chapter VII

EARLY VISIT TO BOSTON

I BEHOLD JUNIUS BRUTUS BOOTH.—EDWIN BOOTH'S DEBUT.—THE TRUE BOSTONIAN.

"Life ain't much more than a farce enny how, but it iz quite necessary that the play should go on, and the farce be well ackted."—Josh Billings.

IT was on this memorable visit to Boston that I first went to a real theater—the old, classic Museum. I saw Junius Brutus Booth, father of the since illustrious Edwin and the evil-starred John Wilkes. The elder Booth, on that occasion, played *Brutus* in John Howard Payne's tragedy of that name. I have only a general recollection of the powerful spell his somber, brooding aspect cast over me. Even then there were tales of his intemperate habits, of his being locked in his dressing-room to insure his being present when the call-boy went around, and of hard drinks imbibed through the keyhole by means of a trusty straw.

But that sort of thing did not so much impress me as did subsequently the thought that during this same engagement at the Boston Museum, young Edwin Booth made his stage debut—on the 10th of September, 1849—playing the small part of *Tressel* to his father's *Duke of Gloucester* in "Richard III."

The fact that Edwin Booth was born on the 13th of November, 1833, and that my own first entrance upon this earthly stage—as already recorded in these chapters—was made on the very next day, has always seemed to me very interesting.

The first of many unforgettable lessons in the art of acting which I acquired at the Museum came directly through the oft-told tale recording an experience of young Booth, under the tutelage of his father in that remarkable debut. They say that when the boy came to his sire's dressing-room, dressed and made up to go on, the elder actor said:

"So you are Tressel? Who was Tressel?"

"A messenger from the field of Tewksbury."

"What was his mission?"

"To bear the news of the defeat of the King's party."

"How did he make the journey?"

"On horseback."

"Where are your spurs?"

Edwin glanced down, and said he had not thought of them.

"Forgot them, did you? Here, take mine."

Edwin unbuckled his sire's spurs, and fastened them on his own boots. His part being ended on the stage, he found his father still sitting in the dressing-room, apparently engrossed in thought.

"Have you done well?" he asked.

"I think so," replied the boy.

"Give me my spurs," rejoined the father.

As I have said, the legendary figure of Junius Brutus Booth did not at first sight loom quite so large in my boyish imagination as it grew to subsequently. Nevertheless, as Shakespeare's fine declamatory lines rolled from the fiery tragedian's lips, he seemed a creature of uncanny power.

I could readily understand why, despite his being a smallish man, his fellow-players and the stage hands were said to keep well out of his way as he came off with drawn sword, wrought up with the excitement of some violent scene.

"This acting must be a great thing," thought I, "when it can make a man so formidable just by force of will."

Though I didn't know it at the time, I was really undergoing my baptism of stage fire. Its effects were afterward manifested, when, as soon as I had settled down to live in Boston, I joined an amateur theatrical club which cast me for, and actually allowed me to play, Othello.

Up to the time of this first Boston visit, notwithstanding my success as a table-tipper, quartetist, elocutionist, and village cut-up generally, my youthful fancy had not as yet even turned towards a stage career. If it had, the "home squelch" administered by my parents would have given it a quietus, for the time being, at least. Still, the idea was rapidly maturing in my mind that the chances of my laying up treasures on earth, on my salary, present and prospective, were

too remote for anything like exact computation. I must strike out somehow, even though it were in the same old dry-goods line, if I would become a prosperous captain of industry.

Boston was the most accessible Pisgah's height from which to look the commercial landscape o'er. So, finally, when I came of age, in the year 1854, I cut loose from parental moorings, and embarked for Boston for keeps. There I struck "Jordan's stream" in the shape of a three-years' contract with that active organization, the emporium of Jordan & Marsh.

I got my three-years' experience in three months, in which time I ascertained that the big business was conducted at a pace too swift for my conservative tendencies, even though a graduate from Jones's of Portsmouth. I shall never forget the characteristic reply of one of the firm to a customer who asked him how he could always be selling goods at a discount:

"My dear sir, we are the good ship Constitution, seventy-one musicians, and a hundred and one guns, and our course is reckless and onward."

Acting upon their possibly ironical suggestion that I might do better for a more conservative firm, I lost no time in disengaging myself from Jordan & Marsh. Simultaneously, by the aid of a strong letter of recommendation from my Portsmouth pastor, the Rev. Andrew P. Peabody, I formed with the well-known dry-goods house of C. F. Hovey & Co. a connection destined to last over eleven years of the formative

period of my life, and to give me ideals of business integrity and honor that are best epitomized by the name cut in solid granite over the front of their store.

Mr. Hovey was a superior character, and he would have been just as successful in any other line of endeavor which he might have undertaken. As I was indebted to his kind encouragement for the first suggestion, the first real boost, of my proper career—as will be shown in the next succeeding chapters—I pause to pay his memory this passing tribute.

The enlightened city was destined to be my home for many years, the scene of my first efforts in the line of public entertainment, the metropolis from which the companies I have been connected with took their names. It may be not amiss, therefore, to set down a few anecdotal sayings, illustrative of the esteem and appreciation in which Boston is held by her children and inhabitants generally. Whenever, in after years, we Bostonians were invited to any "swarry," function, banquet, or other social struggle, it never failed that some alleged wag would arise and make a bid for reputation as a wit by trotting out those trite old allusions to the "Hub of the Universe," the "Athens of America," the transcendent east wind, and the bean-eating prowess of Boston's people. I would always restrain myself, and, without any visible sign of bloodthirstiness, acknowledge the corn, as well as the beans, and then work in my anecdotes, by way of squaring things.

Now, I shall not be so hard upon my readers as to bring out here that inexhaustible stock of wise saws and modern instances, or "blow" in my whole fund of Bostoniana at once. But a few characteristic ones I must recall, by way of showing the general estimate of the New England metropolis by those who know it best.

For one thing, Boston is the paradise of the female sex. Ladies may safely go almost anywhere unattended. No Boston gentleman will allow them to hang on straps in a public conveyance, so long as he has a seat to give up. For this courtesy, polite thanks are invariably rendered. On one occasion, when a colored man had thus given his place, the lady who took it said, "I am sorry to deprive you of your seat."

"No depravity, ma'am; no depravity," replied the Chesterfieldian darkey.

Two sisters of uncertain age having lived together there for the greater part of a lifetime, one of them passed away, leaving the other inconsolable. The surviving sister, after long urging, was finally induced to attend one of those spiritualistic seances which from time immemorial have kept Boston in close touch with the Great Beyond. In due time the old lady heard her name called, and she was placed in communication with the absent loved one. After the first greeting, she asked, "Where are you?" and the answer came, "In heaven." "Well, are you happy?" "Ye-es," was the wistful reply-- "but, oh, Ann dear, it isn't Boston."

Someone has gone a little farther than this and has given us in rhyme the deceased one's conversation with St. Peter, the guard at the gates of heaven. After arriving at the outer door of the celestial sphere, St. Peter questions the Bostonian—

"Sir, what claim do you present
To us to be admitted here?"
The Bostonian—"In Boston I was born and bred,
And in her schools was educated;
I afterward at Harvard rear'd
And was with honors graduated.

"In Trinity a pew I own,
Where Brooks is held in such respect;
And the society is known
To be the cream of the select.

"In fair Nahant—a charming spot—
I own a villa, lawns, arcades,
And, last, a handsome burial lot
In dead Mount Auburn's hallowed shades."

St. Peter mused and shook his head,
Then, as a gentle sigh he drew,
"Go back to Boston, friend," he said,
"Heaven isn't good enough for you."

Another Bostonian—a Beacon Hill lady, out driving in the near suburbs, came upon a square white milestone, with an inscription on it, in plain view by the roadside. It had been newly whitewashed, and the lettering stood out distinctly:

One of Barnabee's wives in "Fatinitza"

Jessie Bartlett Davis, the original Alan-a-Dale in "Robin Hood"

Hattie Brown, another of Barnabee's four wives in "Fatinitza"

Zelie De Lussan in the "Bohemian Girl"

Annie Louise Cary, one of the world's greatest contraltos. She made her first appearance under the management of Mr. Barnabee

Marie Stone as Zerlina in "Fra Diavolo"

Marie Stone as Galatea in Pygmalion and Galatea

Alice Nielsen in "Rip Van Winkle"

Jessie Bartlett Davis as Cynisca in "Pygmalion and Galatea"

Camille D'Arville

Jessie Bartlett Davis in "The Serenade"

Josephine Bartlett in "Rob Roy"

Helen Bertram and Marcia Van Dresser in "Vice-Roy"

Jessie Bartlett Davis as a Mexican girl

Helen Bertram in "Rob Roy"

Helen Bertram and Marcia Van Dresser in "Vice-Roy"

Jessie Bartlett Davis in "Rip Van Winkle"

Marcia Van Dresser

IM
FROM
BOSTON

"See there," she exclaimed to her companion, "the epitaph on that lone gravestone reads 'I'm from Boston!' How simple, yet how sufficient!"

Without intention of disparagement to any other locality, I may say that this was and is about my own sentiment regarding the good old town.

Boston, like Portsmouth, has many historic buildings, but the one in particular that every Bostonian points to with pride is the Old South Meeting House.

In this House, in March, 1770, after the Boston Massacre, an overflowing town meeting waited till night, while Samuel Adams went back and forward to the State House till Hutchinson yielded and withdrew his regiments to Castle Island.

In this House, on November 29, 1773, a meeting of five thousand citizens resolved that the tea should not be landed. During the following month the war-whoop was raised at the door of this House, and citizens disguised as savages led the way to the tea ships. We know what followed.

Here, in this memorable building, were delivered the series of orations from 1771 to 1775 commemorative of the Boston Massacre, by Lovell, Warren, Church and Hancock. In 1775, by order of Gen. Burgoyne, a riding school for British troops was established, pews and pulpit being torn away and destroyed.

At one time there was danger that the historic building, situated in the very heart of the business district, would have to be torn down to make way for mercantile grab and greed, to which there was the most patriotic resistance. A large sum had to be raised to prevent it, and this was done by every conceivable method.

Entertainments of all kinds were given in the old edifice, and at one of them the literary celebrities read from their works. I was there and heard it. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes read "Dorothy Q," and the portrait, with the rapier thrust, was on the platform beside him. Mr. Smith read "My Country 'Tis of Thee" and stated that could he have anticipated the celebrity this poem would attain he should have taken more pains with it—"and spoiled it," interrupted Ralph Waldo Emerson. Mr. Emerson read his "Concord Hymn."

On another occasion Dr. Holmes offered "Grandmother's Tea Party," and James Russell Lowell, "Castles in Spain."

Chapter VIII

TUNING UP AND PLAYING

MR. J. Q. WETHERBEE, MY SINGING MASTER.—A DOCTOR OF MUSIC, MEDICINE AND MINSTRELSY.—THE MERCANTILE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION.—MY NAME IN PRINT.—BURDENED WITH THEATRICAL RESPONSIBILITIES.

"I suppose there are two kinds of music—one kind which one feels, just as an oyster might, and another sort which requires a higher faculty, a faculty which must be assisted and developed by teaching."—Mark Twain.

IT was shortly after I had settled down in Boston as a dry goods clerk at Hovey's emporium that I began to take my vocalism seriously. Music forms an important part of the intellectual currency there, and I began to ask myself: If this voice were worked as a vein, might it not lead eventually to a mine? It was worth trying.

Accordingly, I lopped off several creature comforts from my scale of living expenses, and devoted the portion of my salary thus snatched from the burning to having my tones properly placed. Mr. J. Q. Wetherbee was the "placer" par excellence.*

* It may not be out of place to insert a few lines here regarding Mr. Barnabee's singing master—Mr. J. Q. Wetherbee. Mr. Wetherbee, in addition to what Mr. Barnabee has said, sang in the celebrated quartette choir of Old South Church, took all the prominent bass solo parts in the Handel and Haydn Society concerts, and taught music, though he was not quite as successful in getting large numbers of scholars as many other teachers of less education and far less ability. This was due to the fact that

Mr. Wetherbee was an accomplished gentleman, a superb singer, and was in demand as a soloist at all prominent musicals. That he "placed" my voice in the right spot may be taken as a self-evident fact, since after fifty years of arduous service it still remains in the same locality. Moreover, notwithstanding an occasional bad notice in the press or head-shake of trusty friends, it is today as fresh, vigorous and sonorous an organ as it was in the early days, when I sang "Lady of Beauty, Away, Away," to the right upper corner window of a certain domicile in Daniel Street, Portsmouth.

Whenever, in after years, it became necessary, for purposes of *eclat*, or in order to refute critics who showed a mean disposition to label me a "church choir singer," to state the source of my musical education—when it was up to me to answer the question "Under whom did you study?" my reply was: "Adverse circumstances and J. Q. Wetherbee."

Privately I have always entertained the notion that the best singers are born, not made. Jenny Lind, Henriette Sontag, Adelina Patti, Marcella Sembrich,

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he was too exacting in his requirements. According to a critic of his times, he was a vocalist after the Sims Reeves school, knowing all about the vocal organs, and exactly how to train them in the most careful, perfect manner to attain the best possible results. No voices were injured or ruined through his ignorance and carelessness, but were, on the other hand, benefitted and made more beautiful and perfect by his intelligent, instructive, skilful method. He left Boston disgusted, so we have been informed, because the people preferred a shorter and a charlatan method to an educated, intelligent common sense one such as he imparted. While he left a few good exponents of his sound instruction, he starved while quacks flourished and grew fat.—Editor.

Nellie Melba, Lillian Nordica, Pol Plancon, Enrico Caruso, and others we might name sang like birds as soon as they could talk; and—well, modesty forbids self personalities.

Suffice it to say that I took a minor position in the Rev. Dr. Stowe's Baptist Church on Chauncey Street. My principal recollection of that association, beyond that it kept me in good practice and gained me several valuable friendships, is of the organ playing of Dr. John P. Ordway.

Not that Ordway was precisely in the class of Eddy, Guilmant, or Saint-Säens, but he had a fashion of mingling sacred and profane music that would have staggered even those masters. But this was not all. "Doc" Ordway was a medical practitioner on week days, and also the organizer and proprietor of a popular negro minstrel troupe, which played Boston and the New England circuits continuously for several years.

Music, medicine and minstrelsy—a trinity of M's. The combination was an ideal one, in some respects, and marked Doctor Ordway as the patriarch pioneer of our latter-day Actors' Church Alliance. But sometimes, of a Sabbath morning, he would mix things up with a recklessness that sent cold chills chasing up and down my spine.

He would beckon me aside just before the organ response to the prayer, and eagerly whispering, "Have you heard my latest tune?" would allow the strains of

"Twinkling Stars are Laughing, Love" to filter slyly through the solemn harmonies of the response.

Often he would freeze my young blood by playing that hard-shelled orthodox Baptist congregation out of church with a crazy combination of "Old Hundred," executed with the left hand and pedals, and "Sweet Ham Bone" or "Climbin' up dem Golden Stairs," or some other coon classic provided for the minstrel show, harmonized and deftly embroidered in with the right.

While it was in progress I shivered with dread lest some sensitive ear should detect the double deal in the organ loft, and my gifted improvisational friend be ignominiously ejected by the old sexton and an able-bodied but too critical deacon.

At about this time the Mercantile Library Association was approaching the zenith of its fame and prosperity. It was a sort of a Y. M. C. A. and Cooper Institute combined, with particular stress laid on its monthly entertainments, at which vocalism and elocution were unchained. The Society had new and commodious quarters on Summer Street, just below Hawley. It had a well-stocked library, a hall for entertainments, and a spacious reading-room with its single, isolated work of art, a statuette of "The Wounded Indian," in a glass case, with a "scorn-your proffered - treaty—the - paleface - I - defy" expression on his noble but dust-begrimed marble features. Why a "Wounded Indian" in this educational institution, I never could understand.

Several actors subsequently famous received their early training in the old Mercantile Library Association—notably Edwin Adams, W. E. Sheridan, and Dan Setchell. The last named, it may be necessary to recall, was the clever comedian who, when the elder Sothern and Joe Jefferson were playing "Dundreary" and "Our American Cousin" in the comedy of the latter name, raised the small part of the butler into prominence by juggling his h's.

I remember Dan and the way in which he used to strut forth declaring "The 'orn hof the 'unter his 'eard hon the 'ill." (The horn of the hunter is heard on the hill.) He carried a large sheet of foolscap covered with H's, and, holding it up to the audience, exclaimed:

"Why h'am h'I so h'insulted? h'Ive no h'use for 'em!" He didn't, perhaps, learn this trick at the M. L. A., but he acquired there the habit of building up a character by means of original touches observed in real life, and this was one of them, when it was new.

So the M. L. A. became my first serious training school. Pardon a step backward, but I must here revert to Portsmouth, in order to mention that at the Cameneum there we used to have a sort of imitation Mercantile Library entertainment, where I had made an unexpected hit by tackling the following heavy declamation:

PARRHASIUS AND THE CAPTIVE

Parrhasius stood, gazing forgetfully
Upon his canvas. There Prometheus lay,

Chained to the cold rocks of Mount Caucasus—
The vulture at his vitals, and the links
Of the lame Lemnian festering in his flesh;
And as the painter's mind felt through the dim,
Rapt mystery, and pluck'd the shadows forth
With its far-reaching fancy, and with form
And color clad them, his fine, earnest eye
Flash'd with a passionate fire, and the quick curl
Of his thin nostril, and his quivering lip,
Were like the wing'd god's, breathing from his flight.

"Bring me the captive now!
My hand feels skillful, and the shadows lift
From my waked spirit airily and swift,
And I could paint the bow
Upon the bended heavens—around me play
Colors of such divinity today.

"Ha! bind him on his back!
Look!—as Prometheus in my picture here!
Quick—or he faints!—stand with the cordial near!
Now—bend him to the rack!
Press down the poison'd links into his flesh!
And tear agape that healing wound afresh!

"So—let him writhe! How long
Will he live thus? Quick, my good pencil, now!
What a fine agony works upon his brow!
Ha! gray-hair'd, and so strong!
How fearfully he stifles that short moan!
Gods! if I could but paint a dying groan!

" 'Pity' thee! So I do!
I pity the dumb victim at the altar—

But does the robed priest for his *pity* falter?
I'd rack thee, though I knew
A thousand lives were perishing in thine—
What were ten thousand to a fame like mine?

" 'Hereafter!' Ay—*hereafter!*
A whip to keep a coward to his track!
What gave Death ever from his kingdom back
To check the skeptic's laughter?
Come from the grave tomorrow with that story
And I may take some softer path to glory.

"No, no, old man! we die
Even as the flowers, and we shall breathe away
Our life upon the chance wind, even as they!
Strain well thy fainting eye—
For when that bloodshot quivering is o'er,
The light of heaven will never reach thee more.

"Yet there's a deathless *name!*
A spirit that the smothering vault shall spurn,
And like a steadfast planet mount and burn—
And though its crown of flame
Consumed my brain to ashes as it shone,
By all the fiery stars! I'd bind it on!

"Ay—though it bid me rifle
My heart's last fount for its insatiate thirst—
Though every life-strung nerve be madden'd first—
Though it should bid me stifle
The yearning in my throat for my sweet child,
And taunt its mother till my brain went wild—

"All—I would do it all—
Sooner than die, like a dull worm, to rot—

Thrust foully into earth to be forgot!
O heavens!—but I appall
Your heart, old man! forgive——ha! on your lives
Let him not faint!—rack him till he revives!

"Vain—vain—give o'er! His eye
Glazes apace. He does not feel you now—
Stand back! I'll paint the death-dew on his brow!
Gods! if he did not die
But for *one* moment—one—till I eclipse
Conception with the scorn of those calm lips!

"Shivering! Hark! he mutters
Brokenly now—that was a difficult breath—
Another? Wilt thou never come, O Death!
Look! how his temple flutters!
Is his heart still? Aha! lift up his head!
He shudders—gasps—Jove help him!—so—he's dead."

How like a mounting devil in the heart
Rules the unrein'd *ambition!* Let it once
But play the monarch, and its haughty brow
Glows with a beauty that bewilders thought
And unthrones peace forever. Putting on
The very pomp of Lucifer, it turns
The heart to ashes, and with not a spring
Left in the bosom for the spirit's lip,
We look upon our splendor and forget
The thirst of which we perish!—*N. P. Willis.*

This formidable blank verse stunt I offered with all the boldness and vim of a novice half dead with stage fright. In ordering the slaves to bind and torture that unhappy victim, in order that I might from his agony produce a masterpiece of art, I was absolutely relentless.

"*Let him die!*" I shouted, as I dabbed my imaginary brushes on a palette of thin air, and then in dexterous pantomime plied them on an invisible canvas. Thus I "acted out" the whole painting of a picture, and Portsmouth critics said it was a "fine rendition." And I had meant it should be, because earlier, on the same program, as one of the principals in a debate, I had begun with a "peroration," and then stopped short, having nothing more prepared.

So when I started on my Boston career, I felt at the outset that the real, original and simon-pure Mercantile Library Association was the place for me. Something told me that here would be the proper place to exploit my newly surmised gift of elocution. I lost no time in connecting myself with that illustrious preparatory school, and for a season I did the strictly "legit" in the recitation line, "Parrhasius" still being my trump card.

At the close of that season, when the declamation class held its public exercises in the Tremont Temple before an audience of two thousand people, I had the paralyzing honor of being among those who "*also* recited." My selection on this occasion was not "Parrhasius," but a companion piece to it known as

THE SCHOLAR OF THEBET BEN KHORAT

Night in Arabia. An hour ago,
Pale Dian had descended from the sky,
Flinging her cestus out upon the sea,

And at their watches, now, the solemn stars
Stood vigilant and lone; and, dead asleep,
With not a shadow moving on its breast,
The breathing earth lay in its silver dew,
And, trembling on their myriad, viewless wings,
Th' imprisoned odors left the flowers to dream,
And stole away upon the yielding air.
Ben Khorat's tower stands shadowy and tall
In Mecca's loneliest street; and ever there,
When night is at the deepest, burns his lamp
As constant as the Cynosure, and forth
From his loop'd window stretch the brazen tubes,
Pointing forever at the central star
Of that dim nebula just lifting now
Over Mount Arafat. The sky tonight
Is of a clearer blackness than is wont,
And far within its depths the colored stars
Sparkle like gems—capricious Antares
Flushing and paling in the Southern arch;
And azure Lyra, like a woman's eye,
Burning with soft blue lustre; and away
Over the desert the bright Polar star,
White as a flashing icicle; and here,
Hung like a lamp above th' Arabian sea,
Mars with his dusky glow; and fairer yet,
Mild Sirius, tinct with dewy violet,
Set like a flower upon the breast of Eve;
And in the zenith sweet Pleiades
(Alas—that even a star may pass from heaven
And not be miss'd)—the linkéd Pleiades
Undimmed are there, though from the sister band
The fairest has gone down; and, south away,
Hirundo with its little company;
And white-browed Vesta, lamping on her path

Lonely and planet-calm, and, all through heaven,
Articulate almost, they troop tonight,
Like unrobed angels in a prophet's trance.

* * * * Ben Khorat rose
And silently looked forth upon the East.
The dawn was stealing up into the sky
On its gray feet, the stars grew dim apace,
And faded, till the Morning Star alone,
Soft as a molten diamond's liquid fire,
Burn'd in the heavens. The morn grew freshlier—
The upper clouds were faintly touched with gold;
The fan-palms rustled in the open air;
Daylight spread cool and broadly to the hills;
And still the star was visible, and still
The young astronomer with straining eye
Drank its departing light into his soul.
It faded—melted—and the fiery rim
Of the clear sun came up, and painfully
The passionate scholar press'd upon his eyes
His dusky fingers, and, with limbs as weak
As a sick child's, turn'd fainting to his couch,
And slept. * * * * * * *

* * It was the morning watch once more.
The clouds were drifting rapidly above,
And dim and fast the glimmering stars flew through,
And as the fitful gust sough'd mournfully,
The shutters shook, and on the sloping roof
Plash'd heavily large, single drops of rain—
And all was still again. Ben Khorat sat
By the dim lamp, and, while his scholar slept,
Pored on the Chaldee wisdom. At his feet,
Stretch'd on a pallet, lay the Arab boy,

Muttering fast in his unquiet sleep,
And working his dark fingers in his palms
Convulsively. His sallow lips were pale,
And, as they moved, his teeth showed ghastly through,
White as a charnel bone, and—closely drawn
Upon his sunken eyes, as if to press
Some frightful image from the bloodshot balls—
His lids a moment quivered, and again
Relaxed, half open, in a calmer sleep.

Ben Khorat gazed upon the dropping sands
Of the departing hour. The last white grain
Fell through, and with the tremulous hand of age
The old astrologer reversed the glass;
And, as the voiceless monitor went on,
Wasting and wasting with the precious hour,
He look'd upon it with a moving lip,
And, starting, turn'd his gaze up to the heavens,
Cursing the clouds impatiently.

"'Tis time!"
Mutter'd the dying scholar, and he dash'd
The tangled hair from his black eyes away,
And, seizing on Ben Khorat's mantle-folds,
He struggled to his feet, and falling prone
Upon the window ledge, gazed steadfastly
Into the East:—
"There is a cloud between—
She sits this instant on the mountain's brow,
And that dusk veil hides all her glory now—
Yet floats she as serene
Into the heavens!—O God, that even so
I could o'ermount *my* spirit-cloud, and go!

"The cloud begins to drift!
Aha! fling open! 'tis the star—the sky!
Touch me, immortal mother! and I fly!
Wider! thou cloudy rift
Let through!—such glory should have radiant room!
Let through!—a star-child on its light goes home!

"Speak to me, brethren bright!
Ye who are floating in these living beams!
Ye who have come to me in starry dreams!
Ye who have wing'd the light
Of our bright mother with its thoughts of flame—
(I *knew* it passed through spirits as it came)—

"Tell me! what power have ye?
What are the heights ye reach upon your wings?
What know ye of the myriad wondrous things
I perish but to see?
Are ye thought rapid?—Can ye fly as far—
As instant as a thought, from star to star?

"Where has the Pleiad gone?
Where have all missing stars found light and home?
Who bids the Stella Mira go and come?
Why sits the Pole-star alone?
And why, like banded sisters, through the air
Go in bright troops the constellations fair?

"Ben Khorat! dost thou mark?
The star! the star! By heaven! the cloud drifts o'er!
Gone—and I live! nay—will my heart beat more?
Look! master! 'tis all dark—
Not a clear speck in heaven!—my eyeballs smother!
Break through the clouds once more!—oh, starry mother!

"I will lie down! Yet stay,
The rain beats out the odor from the gums,
And strangely soft tonight the spice-wind comes!
I am a child alway
When it is on my forehead! Abra sweet,
Would I were in the desert at thy feet!

"My barb! my glorious steed!
Methinks my soul would mount upon its track
More fleetly, could I die upon thy back!
How would thy thrilling speed
Quicken my pulse! O Allah! I get wild!
Would that I were once more a desert child!

"Nay—nay—I had forgot!
My mother! my star mother!—Ha! my breath
Stifles!—more air!—Ben Khorat, this is—death!
Touch me!—I feel you not!
Dying!—Farewell! good master!—room!—more room!
Abra! I loved thee! star! bright star! I—come!"

—*Nathaniel P. Willis.*

The line—"The Scholar of Ben Khorat"..H. C. Barnabee—of the program, though it was in Part Second, and by no means a topper, is burned into my memory, being the first time my name had ever appeared in print. Equally unforgettable is the "notice" of the event which appeared in the *Transcript* next day:

"'The Scholar of Ben Khorat' (Willis), was spoken in an easy and correct manner by H. C. Barnabee."

Probably some other "stunts" were mentioned in that notice, but the important sentence I have quoted is the only one I now recall.

That settled my course—for the time being, at least. I was elected chairman of the declamation committee for the next season, with the promise of assistance. When the time approached "for making good" in my position, I became nervous, and feared the worst. It came duly to hand. On the very day that the final program was decided upon, I found to my horror that the two comedians who had been the light of our happy dramatic home had both listened to the call of duty in other spheres, and were not among those present at the final rehearsals. In short I was, to use the slang expression, "up against it," and—here my accident theory, referred to in the previous chapters, looms up again. There was nothing for it but to bill myself as the chief attraction and Protean star, and then live up to the advertisement.

Well, I "made good"—though this theatrical phrase had not then been coined—by singing a ballad, taking part in a Shakespearian scene—Brutus and Cassius, I believe it was—and then, to prepare the audience for the farcical flop in the after piece which concluded the entertainment, I made a quick study of a humorous narrative ditty entitled, "A Trip to Niagara Falls."

This comic song was the "Waiting at the Church" of that day—the middle fifties. Its original exploiter had been a versatile monologuist named Ossian E. Dodge, the man who made himself famous by bidding six hundred dollars for choice of seats at the first Jenny Lind concert in Boston.

My monumental effrontery in thus undertaking a quadruple debut and getting away with it, marked the actual beginning of my public career, though I didn't know it at that time. But the M. L. A. promptly picked me out as promising timber, sober and industrious, and a willing worker. So they fitted me into all the various places that were available, because nobody wanted them.

I became acting director, master of the revels, play censor, barker, stage manager, prompter, tragic comedian, trained vocalist, musical conductor and driver, facial contortionist, comic warbler and was expected to be able to play a horn in the orchestra—all *without* salary and *no* thanks!

My painstaking disposition and acute New England conscience caused me to exert myself and memorize practically all of the acts to be performed, so as to be ready, at signals of distress, to "throw out the life-line" to any actor who stood transfixed, wondering what he was going to say next.

As the Association had no lady members, and its young actors did not feel equal to female impersonations, after the manner of Shakespeare's time, it was necessary in many of our plays to transpose the sex of some of the principal characters. To me, as stage director, fell this delicate task, and I became an ingenious expert in turning Marys into Josephs, and hers into hims, all 'round.

The role of dictator, in case of any conflict of au-

thority, sat becomingly upon me. I drew some mighty fine psychological distinctions in giving my advice to the players, or rebuking any symptoms of thought and originality which ambitious underlings might develop in shaping the conception of their respective parts.

On one occasion, when the would-be tragedian was delaying the "show" too long by going into hiding on the O. P. side of the stage, I sent a hurry call as to what he might be doing.

"Killing Duncan," he replied.

"Yes, and you are also murdering 'Macbeth'!" I yelled, in noble artistic rage from my coign of vantage.

Thus for three or four crowded years, as a Boston prototype of Frohman, I catered to the *elite* of the community, and strove to "give the public what it wanted." But church music, dry-goods, matrimonial aspirations, and other varied interests pulled me in a dozen different directions.

After the happening which I shall relate in the next succeeding chapter, I reluctantly resigned my important but financially unproductive position in the M. L. A. Whether as a result of my withdrawal, or because it was on the cards of manifest destiny anyway, the institution from that period lapsed into innocuous desuetude, and finally closed its checkered career in the parlors of a two-story dwelling house up town.

What a come-down for the mighty! Like ancient Carthage and imperial Rome, like Humpty-Dumpty

and Maginty of more recent times, it never recovered from its fall. But the recollection of it all has not gone to decay. I often dwell with pleasure and pride on the "good nights" when I was the observed of all observers, got "great notices" in the local papers, and even had the thrilling personal sensation of hearing the girls on the front seats whisper: "Isn't he just too cute for anything?"

The old stage door of the M. L. A. that swung open to greet me as an amateur entertainer opened the way that was to lead me to starry domes and professional heights. On that "gone but not forgotten" stage and before the most critical bean eaters of 1856 I made my first *real* attempt as a vocalist, my first bow as a Shakespearian artist, my first efforts as a comic warbler, and my first appearance as a comedian.

In the words of Henry Esmond I had learned that "no man knows his strength 'till occasion proves it." The opportunity presenting itself, I put my strength to the test, and when the tide came in, I took it at its flood, passed the narrows and sailed away to the open sea, under full sail, with colors flying.

Chapter IX

CUSTOMERS, COMMUTERS AND COSTUMES

A COMEDY OF ERRORS.—STUDYING CUSTOMERS.—SINGING "ABROAD."—IN SHAKESPEARIAN GARB.

"In this glorious and well-fought field,
We kept together in our chivalry."
—Wm. Shakespeare.

DURING all these years of Mercantile Library Association activity, and for several years after, I was, by day, diligently following my avocation as head of a department to which I had been promoted at Hovey's Emporium, and evenings pursuing the even basso of my way at concert entertainments and the like. The only drawback I suffered was a constant dread lest my employers should take it into their heads that vocal acoustics and yardsticks were incompatible, and thus cut me off in the blossom of my double career.

One day I was sent for to go to the counting-room. Up to that time I had met Mr. Hovey but once. Now an "all gone" feeling overcame me, and I felt as good as decapitated.

"It has come at last," I muttered to myself, as I walked the "plank" to the captain's office with fear and trembling.

Mr. Hovey received me so graciously that my heartbeats and temperature went back to normal again.

"I have been to the M. L. A.," said my employer, "and I was much pleased with your performance. In my opinion you ought to cultivate your mimetic as well as vocal powers, which are quite unusual."

He ended by inviting me to dine at his house, and, incidentally, to help him entertain, with my Yankee impersonations, a "rising young divine" who was to visit him.

To say that I was "decomposed" and my soul seemingly "transposed" inadequately expresses my surprise at the proposition. But, like a good Yankee, I came to, accepted the invitation and proceeded to pull myself together for the occasion.

At the dinner table Mr. Hovey said, as he stood up to carve the joint:

"I have not asked my friend to say grace, because I know he doesn't believe in such things."

"That is all right," responded the reverend gentleman tranquilly. "Perhaps it *will* be better to wait and see if there is anything to thank a bountiful Providence for."

It struck me that that was a broad statement for a clergyman to make; but I made up my mind he would, therefore, be all the more easily entertained.

Then he told a good story about Daniel Webster, which I have carried in my repertory ever since, but

which I thought a little worldly for a divinity student, and I retorted with a stunt, all the while thinking that for a clergyman our friend was a "brick," whatever he thought about me.

For a final test I came along with "Ethan Spike on the Annexation of Cuba," and succeeded in arousing considerable innocent mirth, without ever bringing a blush to the cheek of clerical modesty.

Later on I discovered that I had fallen for one of Mr. Hovey's little pleasantries, and that his alleged ministerial guest was none other than John C. Wyman, one of Boston's most brilliant raconteurs, while I had been palmed off on him as an earnest agnostic, totally deficient in a sense of humor!

It took years to mutually straighten out this comedy of errors, and then we had many a good laugh over it, but not such a hearty one as Mr. Hovey enjoyed all along. Over the teacups today I cherish this "encounter of wits" as a happy remembrance of Mr. Hovey.

Mr. Hovey passing me off as an agnostic brings to mind a little story in which Col. Robert Ingersoll, the famous agnostic—and he was a dear old friend of mine, too—plays the leading role. Both of us happened to be in Detroit. I called upon him, and when he asked after the condition of my health, I told him I was very well, but that I was considerably annoyed with chronic acidity of the stomach. "Why," said he, "don't you carry Dr. Squibbs' soda with you?" I

replied, "No, I never heard of it." "Why," said he, "it is a most wonderful remedy and gives immediate relief. I am never without it." I ventured to ask him if his confidence was well founded. With that twinkle of his eyes which was the advance agent of his thought he replied, "Mr. Barnabee, I have that confidence in Dr. Squibbs' soda that I should hesitate to sprinkle any of it on an enemy's grave."

I immediately invested in Dr. Squibbs' soda and have used it ever since.

Speaking about Yankee character impersonations and quaint types in real life, I passed my working days in the place where they most did congregate—Hovey's big store. To render a true description of all these would require a book, accompanied by a photograph album. Two or three individuals, however, rise so obstreperously in my memory that I must put them on brief record in order to forget them.

There was a woman afflicted with sleeping lethargy, who would walk in, take a seat, look at the goods and doubtless make up her mind what she wanted, but would say nothing. Then she would drop off into a peaceful slumber, only to awaken with a start half an hour later, after the goods had been cleared away and nothing was left on the counter, and call out sharply,

"Well, give me seven yards of that!"

Another suffered from periodical attacks of facial earthquake, which would come on without the slightest warning. She would ask a question, look the hapless

clerk straight in the eye, and then suddenly her countenance would throw a series of convulsions—unhinging her jaws, changing her mouth, twisting her nose askew, throwing the entire face out of plumb, and making the two eyes look in opposing directions—until the salesman, especially if it was his first encounter of the kind, would have to precipitately duck under the counter to make his own features behave.

Once at a fashionable funeral, when I was officiating as a ten-dollar mourner, with requiem-singing duties weighing me down, I suddenly encountered this person with the landslide physiognomy. A solemn hush pervaded the room as she walked in, took a comprehensive view of the assemblage, and passed down to the left to view the remains, throwing that awful face as she did so. For the *living* spectators, it was an ordeal.

That reminds me! a pastor (I'm not at liberty to give his name) who had been in the habit of using the same formula at all funerals, "Friends will now view the remains." was asked if he could not, occasionally, change the wording slightly and make it seem less formal, replied "Oh, yes! certainly!" At the very next funeral, when it came time for the procession to move, he leaned over the pulpit and, in words capable of double meaning, to the utter astonishment of the assemblage, he said in sonorous tones—"Friends will now *pass the bier.*"

Perhaps the funniest character of all at Hovey's was the floorwalker, or "shop-walker," as we called him.

This gentleman resembled "Old Uncle Ned" in the Bostonese version of the song in that—

"He had no hirsute adornment on the summit of his cranium,
In the locality where the capillary fleece ought to vegetate."

To remedy this deficiency of nature and time, he allowed his locks to grow very long on one side, parted them just over the ear, and pasted them over his uncovered dome as a sort of stringy thatch. This arrangement worked all right, so long as there was "nothing doing," and he could remain in statuesque quiet, but when he got busy and rushed about, those wisps of hair would rise up, with the ends swaying and teetering in the air. Oh, he was a sight! Years after, when cast for the character of Don Bolero in "Girofle-Girofla," I bethought me to have a wig constructed on this pattern, and had no end of fun with it, though some folks who had never visited Hovey's thought it an outrageous and impossible travesty.

At the time when I was doubling as a clerk in the dry goods store and general utility at the M. L. A., I also branched out from my church-choir singing and took part in various concerts. I would be "Rock'd in the Cradle of the Deep" at Roxbury one week and be "Simon, the Cellarer" at a sacred function in Scituate the next.

It was in a church "scituated" at North Scituate that I practically made my debut as a professional concert singer for revenue only. A long, jolting

journey by stage coach transported me to the cold, barren and rock-ribbed shore.

My vocal pipes were just then beginning to respond improvingly to the artistic plumbing of my master, Wetherbee. This being the first time a financial reward had beckoned me on, I felt more than the usual shakiness of the knee-joints, which ever, before and since, has manifested itself in making my bows to the public.

But the fates were propitious as ever, and "Here Upon My Vessel's Deck" I stood sturdily and weathered the storm of applause. I sailed into the harbor of Scituate's kind regards with a deep, double D-flat, and being once assured of my share of the prize-money I felt that "calm and peaceful would be my sleep," and that I was, without doubt, extremely "safe in that ocean wave."

Fortunately that audience was a torrid one—not like the frigid assemblage which greeted us "choir aeolians" at another similar affair, about that time when the unresponsive gloom was so thick that I, as managing director, felt impelled to go out on the platform and make the following grave announcement to the petrified assemblage:

"Fellow-mourners: the corpse didn't arrive with us, but it will be along later, so we may as well proceed with the funeral services."

Whether or not the audience appreciated the joke I do not remember, but the "artists" certainly did.

Yes, the North Scituate music lovers were genial, but their climate was positively polar. In the country hotel where we put up, fires were never lighted above the ground floor. We had to have the outfit of an Arctic expedition in the way of bedclothes—and even then we nearly froze to death.

In the middle of the night the tenor and myself got up, lighted a candle and went prowling about the vacant chambers, in the hope of finding something more that could be utilized as covering. Nothing rewarded our search, except a discarded hoopskirt. My companion kicked it aside in disgust. But I gathered it in, saying, "I'm going to put it on the bed anyway—it may tangle up the cold some."

Our company was called at 6 A.M., but I balked, and had a violent altercation with the night watchman as to the impropriety of a freeze-out at such an unearthly hour. That fellow was a humorist, it seems, though I didn't appreciate that fact at the time.

"Wall, ef you want breakfast," he said nonchalantly, "you'd better get up, fer we've got to hev them sheets for tablecloths."

The man went downstairs and I overheard someone asking if Barnabee was awake yet.

"His head is," replied the gentle clam-digger, "but I can't say about them long legs of his'n."

However, those were only preliminary experiences, to prepare and harden me for "going on the road" later in my professional career. For the time being I was

buoyant and hopeful, with the thrill of a first substantial success circulating merrily through the gates and alleys of my corporeal frame.

Fortified with the dawning conviction that from henceforth I was going to be some sort of a "potent factor" in musico-artistic affairs, and with the American eagle in the form of a well-earned "tenner" screaming in my trousers pocket, I could afford to be impervious alike to summer's heat and winter's cold. I would not have given up *five cents* of my first concert money for an electric fan or for a fur-collared overcoat with a rubber hot-water lining.

Tersely expressed, I was stage struck, and it hit me hard. The hallucination, or obsession, or whatever it was, resulted in the formation of a "dramatic club," the organization to include budding players of both sexes, and to be dedicated to the altruistic purpose of presenting Shakespearean drama for Art's sake only, untainted by any suspicion of commercialism or thought of sordid gain, yet in a style calculated to make really-and-truly actors hide their diminished heads.

Needless to say, I was in on the ground floor of this scheme. Probably I fell into it accidentally, for I was not pushed, as yet, by any inside information telling me that Booth, Forrest and myself were three of a kind so far as the show business was concerned.

We started in modestly with "The Merchant of Venice." Our Rialto was a private residence, at No. 9 Allston Street. Owing to some oversight, possibly,

I was not cast as Shylock, but lent my illumination to the comparatively minor role of Gratiano.

I do not wish to flatter myself, but I think that that amateur Portia of the occasion felt she was doing the right thing when I exclaimed:

> "A Daniel come to judgment!
> Oh, wise young judge, how do I honor thee!"

Nerissa was "the t'other Miss Greene"—there being two young ladies of that name in our company. Though she saucily averred that "Gratiano spoke a deal of nothing," she must have felt some palpitation of the heart when he declared, with somewhat more ardor than was really necessary:

> "My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours,
> You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid,
> You loved, I loved"—

And t'other Miss Greene's fiance in the audience looked on with jealous eye and wondered if I really meant it.

We next "did" "Othello," a tragedy by the same author who had written our previously mentioned comedy success. This change of bill was made despite the warning of a local newspaper critic, who wrote, regarding our private theatricals: "Many of the performances have been excellent, and failures almost invariably may be attributed to having selected a tragedy instead of some light comedy or farce."

This time I found my proper artistic level, being cast

for Othello myself. From Gratiano to the Moor was a broad high jump, but I took it without a quiver. I was the vaulting youth who laughed at obstacles and felt as though I could scale any height, and in the grand and sounding phrases of Desdemona's lover I calculated that my "correct and easy elocution"—as the newspapers sometimes phrased it, when we put in a paid ad—would get a chance.

To this day I rather think I can declaim Othello's address to the Senate, and give the account of his "whole course of love," in a manner warranted to make any girl "wish that Heaven had made her such a man."

In the denunciation of Desdemona for having lost the fatal handkerchief I was very terrible, bellowing in hoarse, stentorian tones, unheeding her protestations of innocence: "The handkerchief! the handkerchief!" with such damnable iteration that the unsophisticated playgoer from Dedham murmured in loud sotto voice: "Oh, thunder! blow your nose without it, and go on with the play."

At all events, my "Mr. Moore of Venus"—as our own Mrs. Malaprop had it marked down in her album—created such a ripple that the manager of a real theater in the suburbs of Boston made me "overtures," and I might even say full scores, to repeat my unique performance at his house. Providence, in the guise of what passed for my extreme modesty, stepped in and vetoed this proposition. So it came about that,

instead of disputing the crown of tragedy with the two mighty Edwins—Forrest and Booth—I was diverted into comic rivalry with Warren and Jefferson.

Chapter X

WAITING AT THE CHURCH

SINGING IN THE UNITARIAN CHURCH.—A GIFT GOD.—I HEAR WEDDING BELLS AND BUY THE RING.—FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.—A FRAGRANT MEMORY.

"Here's to the woman who has a smile for every joy, a tear for every sorrow, a consolation for every grief, an excuse for every fault, a prayer for every misfortune, an encouragement for every hope."—Sainte Foix.

IN mentioning "Jamaica Plain," it has often been found necessary, owing to the coincidence of a brand of rum, to explain that the above name indicates a locality on the map, and in no way relates to an alcoholic stimulant or the habit of taking it unmixed. But the inhabitants of Jamaica Plain deserve credit for their hospitality, if not for their conviviality —as I can testify from the recollection of many a good dinner there.

After my graduation from "Ordway's Aeolians," I bound myself out to service in the quartette of the Unitarian Church at Jamaica Plain, a Boston suburb. I became a favorite singer at this church, discounting any of the reigning bassos by half a foot, in the opinion of that vestry and congregation, and getting solid with them to such an extent that even the operatic subterranean voices of the period were regarded as scarcely more than my echoes.

At all the festivities of the parish I was a welcome (unpaid) guest. I even put on white whiskers and played Santa Claus at the Christmas festival, making my entrance in real Santa Claus fashion.

Yes, that was a great "hit" I made in 1860 as Santa Claus. I was a tall fellow, and somehow the minister picked me out of all that big congregation of good men to be the understudy in case the gift god failed to appear. Of course I was flattered and frightened, but I began to study my part. "Mrs. Partington"—B. P. Shillaber—wrote me a beautiful little address, and my folks helped me to secure the Santa garb. There were about seven hundred children in the Sunday-school, and all the old folks who could squeeze into the building came to the festival.

I remember that a small boy with cheeks like red apples and a little suit of clothes that fitted him like the bag on a well-done plum pudding had been selected to recite:

"'Twas the night before Christmas
And all through the house
Not a creature was stirring—
Not even a mouse."

When he came to the line about "the clatter on the roof," I sprung a watchman's rattle, bounced in through the window and took the whole festival by surprise. The young reader didn't finish his carol. The apple tints left his fat cheeks, his little fingers stood apart like icicles, his mouth opened and he got as white as

the beard I was wearing. When I began to say funny things and inquire about the naughty boys who went fishing on Sunday, and the little girls who habitually forgot their verses, astonishment gave way to the most exquisite delight. Merriment was not the word, the little ones were entranced.

Before "delivering the goods," I delivered the welcome address, one of the sweetest things Shillaber ever wrote. As the lines were written expressly for me and were never recited except by me, they ought to find a place of welcome in my autobiography, and now —if you will give me your kind attention, I shall proceed to repeat them. Many years have passed since first I committed them to memory, but as long as Christmas comes 'round and my physical body is able to greet the morn with a voice of gladness, I shall continue to repeat them as a message of good cheer, a glad tidings—a peace on earth, good will towards men. Listen, then, for—

I greet you, friends—I've on my journey come
To meet you in your sweet contented home;
Full well I know that e'en 'mid cold and storm
I'd find the Christmas fire all bright and warm.
It does me good to view a scene like this
Where old and young commingle not amiss,
For all are children in the generous light
That flashes round about your way tonight.
Old boys and young boys all are equal here
On this great carnival that glads the year.
Play all your games, let your warm hearts expand,

My gifts I give you with a lavish hand.
'Tis Christmas time, let no obtrusive jar
Come in your festive joyousness to mar,
Give fullest scope to happiness and glee
And pay your tribute, gentle folks, to me!

I'm Santa Claus!—a spirit very old—
Spirit that's aged is the best, I'm told—
I have no home, but North, South, East and West
I with the good alone —a brief hour rest,
I flee along upon the buoyant wind
Until the right companionship I find,
Then smile upon them as I greet you here,
Nor come again until another year.
No one who harbors me will e'er find cause
To frown with memory of Santa Claus.

My back is broken with my work today,
I've travelled far and on a devious way;
I've striven hard to shed around delight
And filled a thousand stockings full tonight.
I'm tired truly with the task I've done
And so I'll rest awhile and see your fun.
Bless you! 'mongst all the people where I've been
I've never looked upon a brighter scene.

I'll mingle with you—be old with old folks,
Young with the boys, and chuckle at their jokes;
Talk with the matrons, with the maidens chat—
And take a part in what you all are at.
Before the morn I'll be in some other clime,
So now, good people, let us have a time."

While on the Christmas side track, allow me to state that I believe I have been an understudy for dear old

Santa Claus every year since my debut in 1860. I remember one year when we ("The Bostonians") were on the road going from St. Louis to Cincinnati; but that didn't make any difference. We kept Christmas as it should be kept.

We had a private car, the men were driven out of the smoking room, a tree was brought in, I made up as well as I could with feathers and curled hair plucked from pillows and mattresses, ravellings of bath towels, mucilage and crystal fringe, and we had a jolly time with loads of presents, plenty of songs, laughter and carols, a few tears and a lot of the true spirit of Christmas. There were no children on that occasion, but after all there is only a sad difference between the little ones and those of an older growth. By actual count I delivered 787 presents on this memorable occasion, and after the deed was done, Santa Claus sat down and dined with the glorious basso, Myron Whitney.

Another Christmas I cannot forget is one on which I was "Santa Claus in bed." In the closing chapters of these "immortals" you will be informed how it all came about, but sufficient is it to state here that despite my awkward position as a bearer of gifts, I did preside as an "immovable Santa Claus." Of course I wore an imposing make up and tried to recite Mr. Shillaber's lines. Unfortunately I could not recall my regular Santa speech and was forced to substitute some of my own "originals." In addition to the general remarks

to the party, I wrote verses to accompany every gift ("the gift without the giver is bare," you know), but some of the recipients being unknown, my poetical efforts would fail to arouse much appreciation. However, there was a verse for my dear wife's present and one for Tom Karl's that *I* have not forgotten.

Attached to the two dolls presented to my wife were these lines:

"Old age and youth, when they flock well together,
Grow much alike, and become birds of a feather.
We intend that this pair shall continue to jaunty be
We give them, in charge, to dearest 'Aunty B.'"

My friend Tom was given a drum, along with the following note:

"The spirit stirring drum' was spoken of by nearly black Othello
But how a drum could 'stir' doth not appear to this ere 'stupid fellow.'
At all events if it *can* 'stir' a 'spirit' that will cheer
May it fill your 'spirits' full, Tom, as the 'drum' inside your ear."

Blessed Christmas! It's the best day of the whole year. It makes children of us all. I wouldn't give up my hold on Christmas for all the fete days of all the nations on earth. Children! God bless them, they keep me young, and wherever they are you will find me every time.*

* "Mr. Barnabee is passionately fond of children, and in the hotels when he is wanted, no one ever goes to the smoking or reading room to look for him. He likes nothing better than the society of a small boy, with a box

It just takes fifty years off my age when I get thinking about chimney corners, Christmas stockings, Santa Claus and children. And when I read a story about a Christmas tree I am glorious, matchless twenty-three.

Proceeding with our story. Having pried up the crust of Boston's exclusive musical set, I became *persona grata* at some of its high functions, and rapidly accumulated prestige. So much so, that presently I was adjudged the proper thing for the quartet of the new Church of the Unity.

I had a *voice* in the dedication of that temple of worship which was to come into national fame through the ministrations of such divines as the Rev. Dr. Geo. Hepworth and the Rev. Dr. Minot J. Savage. The first solo ever sung within those walls was mine—a performance which two days' anticipated "stage fright," with attendant nausea and heart failure, enabled me to execute with due feeling.

With the exception of one year, during which I directed the choir at Dr. Putnam's church in Roxbury, my Unitarian connection lasted twenty-three years. During that time I contrived to hold my own, vocally, with the old standbys as well as the young fledglings who emerged, and I formed what in some cases turned out to be lifelong friendly and professional

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of building blocks, unless it is two small boys, with a sailboat that needs rigging. He is content to lie on his back, Gulliver fashion, and let troops of children walk on him and rifle his pockets. Mrs. Barnabee is devoted to him; she calls him her "dear boy" and the gentle comedian suits the term."
—The late Jessie Bartlett Davis.

associations with members of that historic Unity quartet. Two of these, who afterward adorned larger spheres of action, were W. H. Fessenden, who became one of the tenors of the "Boston Ideals," also of Mrs. Thurber's ill-fated American opera company; and Marie Stone, who, after five years' study in Europe, and a year as matinee soprano with Emma Abbott, joined the Ideals, later the "Bostonians," of which organization she was the prima donna par excellence for a long term of years.

Other Unity associate singers were Louise Adams, Mrs. Barry, Addie Ryan and William H. Wadleigh, with Howard M. Dow, the organist, one of the very best, a perfect piano accompanist, my companion, guide, philosopher and friend through my concert career. At Dr. Putnam's in Roxbury, I first made the acquaintance of Sarah W. Barton, Mathilde Phillipps and William McDonald.

The two eminent Unitarian preachers whom I have named both went to New York in later years, on the same plan, I suppose, as good Americans are said to go to Paris when they die. Dr. Hepworth, you will remember, was for many years Mr. James Gordon Bennett's private chaplain, and the good gray Sunday editor of the *Herald*. Dr. Savage succeeded the Rev. Robert Collyer as pastor of the Church of the Messiah. Both these clergymen were "stars" in Boston, never failing to fill the church and the contribution boxes. Listening to their literary sermons, I fancied I learned

to distinguish the difference between sound and sense —between eloquence and sequence—between whirling words and terse logic—between sonorous phrases delivered with conscious elocutionary flourish, and sincere truth uttered with the effect of conviction.

But theology was not the main subject of my preoccupation. I became a model vestryman, and at church sociables was constantly receiving encouragement to develop my talents for amusing deadhead audiences. Such a reputation did I acquire as a "topliner" at functions of this sort that perhaps it was quite natural a morning newspaper should get my name mixed up with other happenings, and end up its detailed report of a railroad catastrophe with the stereotyped phrase:

"Mr. Barnabee added to the interest of the occasion by singing several comic songs."

Another interest with which I busied myself at this period was getting married. My best Portsmouth girl, regardless of the efforts of other possibly disappointed maidens to disparage me by sending comic valentines reflecting on my personal appearance, kept in mind only my sterling worth of character, so that in her estimation I figured proudly as a fit and proper man. Correspondence proving eventually inadequate to feed the flame, we decided to become "nearer" as well as "dearer" to one another.

My financial condition now seemed to warrant the venture, thanks to a raised salary and yearly

"dividend" from the generous Hovey & Co., together with my stipendiary emoluments for lifting my voice in anthem, hymn and "Te Deum," and an occasional boost from a partial and indulgent concert-going public.

So we agreed to take the long journey together. It began at Warner, New Hampshire, on the first day of December, 1859. As my wife has been my steadfast partner in joy and sorrow, in shadow and sunshine, in sickness and health, my almost constant companion in all travel by land and sea, and over the interminable one-night stand routes that intersperse our great and glorious country, my wardrobe mistress and dressing-maid, and the long-suffering auditor upon whom to try all my new parts, I feel sure that all who know my temperamental peculiarities will regard this, her life-story, as a monument to loving endurance.

As I write these words on the seventy-eighth anniversary of my birth, remembering what I have been "up against" on some occasions, a loser in every private scheme for enhancing my worldly fortune, taking my dose of the medicine of struggle and disappointment, a physical sufferer from the days of the "castor oil, senna and manna" doctor of the old school to this present age of enlightened and skillful (?) surgical practice, with constant headaches of all the fifty-seven varieties, a mental prey to nervous apprehension and melancholia, the "stuffed bosom" filled with "that perilous stuff that weighs upon the heart"—as I reflect

upon this, and think that I have come out of it all, at my age, in firm health, strength and voice, with what I claim to be a serene and unruffled temper, with heartfelt gratitude for "all the joys I have tasted," with forgiveness for all who have done me wrong; and with courage for whatever may betide—I cannot but feel that she, above all others, made life worth while, and, by reason of her fortitude and faith, tempered every wind.

Mrs. Barnabee passed away on Christmas Day, 1909. A chapter might be made of the notable expressions called forth by her death from leading journals and men and women known to fame. It is impossible to give any fair sample of them here, but among the many, the *Morning Telegraph*, of December 30, may serve, perhaps, as a good specimen:

DEATH OF MRS. BARNABEE

There will be general mourning throughout the theatrical profession when this paragraph conveys the news of the death of Mrs. Henry Clay Barnabee at her home in Jamaica Plain, Mass., on Christmas Day.

Mrs. Barnabee was in her seventy-fourth year and had not been in good health for many months. A letter from Mr. Barnabee states that she died peacefully and painlessly while sitting in her favorite chair by a window.

On December 1 Mr. and Mrs. Barnabee celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their wedding. For thirty years Mrs. Barnabee was prominently before the public and was beloved by all that knew her. To her friends she always was known as "Aunt Clara." Throughout adversity, as well as success, and even at the dissolution of the old Bostonians, never once did she lose her kindly, benevolent, cheery smile, and in her passing there is lost to the world a fine, gentle, lovable woman.

At the funeral of Mrs. Barnabee, Tom Karl, Mr. Barnabee's associate for many years, sang the favorite hymns, "Lead, kindly Light," and "Abide with Me." The services were held in the chapel at Forest Hills, and were conducted by Rev. Charles F. Dole. Later the remains were conveyed to Portsmouth for interment.

This notice would be incomplete without some fuller allusion to her life, and to the marked traits of her character.

The following obituary lines were prepared by a woman now residing in Warner, N. H., the birthplace of Mrs. Barnabee. This same writer, it is interesting to note, was a very close friend of the late leader of the Christian Science cult, Mary Baker Eddy, in her younger days.

MRS. HENRY CLAY BARNABEE

Mrs. Henry Clay Barnabee was a native of Warner, born August 17, 1834, at the Lower village, in the old-time mansion, with the Lombardy poplars in front, the site of which is now occupied by the modern residence of Harlon S. Willis, her step-brother by the marriage of her mother to the Rev. Lemuel Willis. Her father was Major Daniel George, of a widely known and influential family, who served his country and gained his title in the War of 1812. He left an honorable record in Warner, his native town, through his long life of usefulness, doing much for the interests of his immediate neighborhood, by building the hotel and store which helped to make the lower village a business center for many years.

Her mother, his second wife, was Abigail Bean, a rare and attractive woman, of great amiability and personal charm, of the numerous and now widely scattered family from the Bean homestead on Pumpkin hill, so well remembered, as it stood—another of the stately mansions—four-square, with the conventional poplars in front, a landmark for all the country around, and a center of never-failing hospitality.

Mrs. Barnabee, a beautiful and charming girl, spent her early years in Warner, and after her marriage fifty years ago was a frequent visitor to Warner. She identified herself with her husband's interests to a very unusual degree. Through all his brilliant career she was literally his helpmate; in her quiet way relieving him of little cares, taking upon herself responsibility in practical things, so that he should be free to give himself wholly to his work.

Although she had been in failing health for several years, death came suddenly. She had enjoyed the Christmas day, with the gifts that had been sent her, watched her husband as he left the house, waved her handkerchief until he was out of sight, then settled back in her chair and passed out of life.

She left many relatives on both her father's and mother's side, but of her nearest kin, only two nieces, daughters of her only own brother.

During the past year, it has been my rare privilege to read and examine a number of books containing musical programs, souvenir programs, press notices, poetical selections and other literary articles which the deceased had clipped from various sources and gathered together between

permanent bindings for future reference and perusal. It is true that the hands that pressed the columns into the making of them have been folded in the serene repose of death, but the unique work has been delivered to us as an index to those mundane things—blessings I should christen them—which, though wrapped in silence, appealed to the upbuilding of a strong and lovable character.

I could select nothing better to reprint from the little library of priceless gems than that lofty expression which Mrs. Barnabee preserved on the fly-leaf of one of her cherished keepsakes, It is the place of woman in man's sphere:

"If a man is in grief, who cheers him; in trouble, who consoles him; in wrath, who soothes him; in joy, who makes him doubly happy; in prosperity, who rejoices; in disgrace, who backs him against the world, and dresses with gentle unguents and warm poultices the rankling wounds made by the slings and arrows of outrageous Fortune? Who but woman, if you please?"—*The Virginians.*

And hasn't she fulfilled all this, not in vain words, but by unforgotten deeds in the life of one with whom she shared her own during fifty years of married life?

The love of others was ever her psalm of life; and there never was a person who sung that psalm more sweetly, more clearly, more tenderly, and to a nobler purpose. Her charity, like a perennial spring, flowed forth with a crystal beauty.

I venture to state that her noble motto was:

"I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

Yes, this must have been a prime favorite of hers, for on perusing her leaves of noble expressions, I find that she repeats the declaration time and time again. And I am not alone in my belief. A vast company of players who were servitors in the sphere of art and amusement when she played "mother" to scores of prominent singers and actors,

will testify in this or in the world of revelation, that if this was the cross she wore, she not only carried it as a gem for all its beauty, but she held it as a standard and conquered by it; and that they, too, can count themselves among the "stars" who were made brighter by her power of noble inspiration.

Today, after fifty years of vanished sunrises and faded sunsets, another pen offers a tribute to the "beauteous spirit" of the same Clara George. And that pen, even at its best, falls short in its efforts to add a single word to the life record of one who has solved life's riddle. She has departed, it is true, but she has left footprints on the New England sands, and bequeathed to her surviving friends that which alone can give consolation to the living—the memory of the good deeds and virtues of the dead. And that memory is the best and purest link forged between this world and the better. Long may her precious memory be cherished!—*Editor.*

Chapter XI

FIRST OPERATIC AWAKENINGS

I HEAR GRAND OPERA.—JENNY LIND, HENRIETTE SONTAG AND OTHERS.—A GALAXY OF STARS AND OPERAS.—GOOD OLD HANDEL AND HAYDN.

Singers: It is theirs to show to true men and women that they can live noble and exalted lives in harmony with the divine plan of music.

GRISI and Mario, the two greatest stars of their time, lighted up the operatic firmament in my early years in Boston. The emotion of listening to them was my first attack of grand opera fever, and it was a severe one. How I ever survived it I cannot tell, for it was a nightly succession of chills and thrills that would discount any known combination of ague, fever and malaria.

The prices, though as nothing compared to their present elevation, were highly seasoned for my anemic purse. The top gallery, or "amphitheater," was about my financial level. It was a long way up, but with the landing-stages and my advantageous length of limb, I could give a handicap to any aspiring or perspiring youth, and then beat him to the front seat.

My first opera was Bellini's "I Puritani," the same which Impresario Hammerstein has just resurrected, half a century later, for the inauguration of his new

Manhattan Opera House. But it can be no such revelation today as it was to me back in the fifties. The superb *ensemble*, the awe-inspiring orchestra, filled me with fervent enthusiasm. When Badiali and Susini, the matchless baritone and equally unrivalled basso, "sounded the trumpets" in the grand Liberty duet, I wondered how the roof could possibly stay on.

I am one of those who remember having heard Jenny Lind—it was in the vast hall over the Fitchburg Depot, and even the locomotives hushed their hullabaloos to listen to the Swedish nightingale's song. It seems unfair to crow over music-lovers who, through no fault of their own, were born too late to enjoy this treat, and must worship latter-day idols. Yet I stubbornly contend that never before or since Jenny Lind has there been quite such a lovely example of all that was gracious in personality and divinely sympathetic in song.

Henriette Sontag, a supreme exponent of the coloratura art – who might be called the Marcella Sembrich of her day—was a still later recollection, as I attended her concert in the old Temple at Portsmouth before I knew what heroic singing really meant. I admit this is a repetition, but she deserves it.

The first opera night at the Boston Theater, however, marked the date when I broke into the unknown, enchanted realm of dramatic music, filled with suns, moons, planets, stars, falling meteors and flashing comets of the divine art. It was a world peopled with

wonderfully gifted beings, bearing such magic names as La Grange, Fabri, Piccolomini, Kellogg, Formes, and Brignoli. They taught me what it is to charm and sway the hearts of men, and they had their throngs of worshippers quite as numerous and as extravagant as our Melbas, Renauds, Plancons and Carusos of the present. Many a blissful hour I passed in my amphitheater heaven, rapt in the chorded strains that rose to my spellbound ears, oblivious to all mere mundane happenings, persons and ills.

For the benefit of those who may fancy that ours was a benighted musical sphere, I could write in here the lists of casts of operas from the earlier days prepared by my late companion. The procession occupied twenty-five years in passing, and is a reminiscence of the long ago, whose combination of art, song and *mise en scène* lingers in my memory and brings back the light and happiness of other days. The singers and their songs have all faded from earthly hearing, but in that "undiscovered country" that awaits our coming, their voices are joined in the "choir invisible" whose music is the gladness of the world.

ARTISTS AND OPERAS, 1854–1879

ARTISTS APPEARING 1854–1860

Signor Amodio
Signor Arnoldi
Signor Assoni
Mme. Avogadro
Frederico Badiali
Signor Barattina
Signor T. Barattini
Signor Barili
Signor Borrani
Pasqualino Brignoli
Signor Ceresa
Signor Coletti
Pauline Colson
Adelaide Cortesi
Signorina Donovani
Nantier Didiée
Amati Dubreuil
Signor Ferri
Signor Florenza
Carl Formes
Signor Gasparoni

Madame Gassier
Signor Gassier
Marietta Gazzaniga
Madame Grisi
William Harrison
Elsie Hensler
Mme. Johannsen
Marcel Junca
Mme. Laborde
Anna de La Grange
Signorina Landi
Domenico Lorini
Bertucca-Maretzek
Signor Mario
M. Meyer
Harrison Millard
Raffaele Mirati
Signor Morelli
Madame Morra
Signor Müller
Herr Ochrlein
Adelina Patti
Maria Piccolomini
Adelaide Phillips
Mlle. Poinsart
Louisa Pyne
Susan Pyne
Mr. Reeves
Signor Reutler
Signor Rocco
Signor Rovere
Signor Sbriglia
Balbina Steffenone
Signor Salviani
Signora Seidenburg
Amalia Strakosch
Signor Susini
Signor Stigelli
Signor Stefani
Signor Taffanelli
Signor Tamaro
Mme. Von Berkel
Felicita Vestvali
Mr. Whiting
Joseph Weinlich

OPERAS PRESENTED 1854–1860

(Alphabetically arranged)

Cinderella
Crown Diamonds
Czar and Carpenter
Der Freischütz
Don Giovanni
Don Pasquale
Elisire d'Amore
Ernani
Fidelio
Fra Diavolo
Guy Mannering
I Puritani
Il Polinto
Il Trovatore
La Favorita
La Sonnambula
La Traviata
Linda di Chamouni
Lucia di Lammermoor
Lucrezia Borgia
Maritana
Masaniello
Mason and Locksmith
Montecchi e Capuletti
Norma
Rigoletto
Romeo and Juliet
Semiramide
Stabat Mater
The Barber of Seville
The Beggar's Opera
The Bohemian Girl
The Martyrs
William Tell

ARTISTS OF THE SEASONS 1860–1870

Edith Abell
Signor Antonucci
J. A. Arnold
Mons. Aujac
Ranieri Baragli
Signor Bellini
Mons. Benedick
Caroline Richings Bernard
Pierre Bernard
Signor Biachi
Allesandro Boetti
Mme. Borchard
Signora Bosisio
Pauline Canissa
S. C. Campbell
Mme. Comte-Bochard
Mme. Carozzi-Zucchi
William Castle
Angelina Cordier
Isabella Cubas
Elena D'Angri
Mons. Decre
Mlle. Duclos
Mons. Duchesne
Charles Drew
Mons. Edgard
Madame Inez Fabbri
Signor Ferranti
Mons. Francis
Signor Frederici
Erminia Frezzolini
Signora Garoffi
Mary Gonzales
Mons. Guidon
Theodore Habelmann
Gustavus F. Hall
Mons. Hamilton
Mme. Hamilton
Laura Harris
Minnie Hauck
Joseph Hermanns
Rose Hersee
Franz Himmer
Isabella Hinckley
Ettore Irfre
Mlle. Irma
Clara Louise Kellogg
Mons. Lagriffoul
Mlle. Aline Lambèle
Mons. Leduc

Signor Lotti
Signor Maccaferri
Signor Manni
Signor Massimiliani
Francisco Mazzolini
Isabel McCulloch
Miss Montmorency
Heinrich Steinicke
Henrietta Sulzer
Natali Testa
Mlle. Tostée
Jennie Van Zandt
Mme. Varian
Laura Waldron
Senor Ximenes
Signor Ypolito
Giorgio Ronconi
Parepa Rosa
Signor Rossi
Signor Rubio
Johanna Rotter
Arthur Edward Seguin
Mrs. Zelda Seguin
Agatha States
Fannie Stockton
Signor Nanni
Carlotta Patti
Henry Peakes
James Peakes
Carmen Poch
Signor Quinto
Antoinette Ronconi
Signora Moreni
Signorina Morenzi
Anna Mischka
Signor Mussiani

OPERAS, 1860–1870

In addition to numerous presentations of some of the older operas, this period witnessed the following operas for the first time in Boston:

A Night in Granada
Barbe Bleue
Belisario
Crispino e la Comare
Daughter of the Regiment
Dinorah
Doctor of Alcantara
Don Juan
Don Sebastian
The Black Domino
The Jewess
The Marriage of Figaro
The Masked Ball
Faust
Il Giuramento
La Dame Blanche
La Belle Hélène
La Grande Duchesse
La Périchole
L'Africaine
Le Chanson de Fortunio
Les Noces de Jeanette
The Puritan's Daughter
The Rose of Castile
The Star of the North
Lischen und Fritzchen
Martha
Merry Wives of Windsor
Mons. Choufleuri
Nabucodnosor
Orphèe aux Enfers
Robert le Diable
Saffo
Sicilian Vespers
Stradella

ARTISTS, 1870–1879

Charles R. Adams
Marie Aimée
Henry Clay Barnabee
Mons. A. Barre
Annie Beaumont
Mary Beebe
Brookhouse Bowler
Italo Campanani
Alice Carle
William T. Carlton
Joseph Victor Capoul
Annie Louise Cary
Georgia Cayvan
John H. Chatterson
Eugene Clarke
Aynsley Cook
George A. Conly
Miss Cooney
Clara Doria
Marie Leon Duval
Mr. Henri Drayton
Mrs. Henri Drayton
W. H. Fessenden
Wilhelm Formes
Rossi-Galli
Adolph Franosch
Signor A. Frapoli
Christian Fritsch
George B. Frothingham
Etelka Gerster
L. G. Gottschalk
Mme. F. Guidotti
Mlle. Haffner
Alexander Human
Mme. Intropidi
Amalia Jackson
Josef Jamet
Gus Kammerlee
Tom Karl
Mme. Lablanche
Miss Lancaster
Louise Lichtmay

Marie Litta
Pauline Lucca
James Maas
Joseph Maas
Louise Marchetti
Victor Maurel
Annis Montague
Christine Nilsson
Rachel A. Noah
Ernesto Orlandini
Mme. Marie Palmieri
Eugènie Pappenheim
George R. Parks
Clara Perl
Signorina Persiani
Mathilde Phillips
Giuseppe Del Puento
Bertha Roemer
Alexander Reichardt
G. Reina
Mlle. A. Rosetti
Marie Roze
Madame E. Rudersdorf
Marie Sand
Teresa Carreno Sauret
Mme. Sinico
Annie Starbird
Signor G. Tagliapietra
Enrico Tamberlik
Teresa C. Titiens
Ostava Torriani
Edward Vierling
Signor Vizzani
Geo. Werrenrath
Myron W. Whitney
Mathilde Wilde

OPERAS, 1870–1879

During the seasons covering this period Bostonians had the privilege of hearing the operas:

Aida
Carmen
Fatinitza
Flying Dutchman
Giroflé-Girofla
H. M. S. Pinafore
La Belle Poule
La Boulangère a des Ecus
La Fille de Madame Angat
La Gazza Ladra
La Jolie Parfumeuse
La Vie Parisienne
Les Dragons de Villars
Lohengrin
Mignon
Oberon
Rip Van Winkle
Satanella
Tannhauser
The Huguenots
The Lily of Killarney
The Magic Flute
The Water Carrier

When I joined the Handel and Haydn Society, the oldest musical body in Boston, if not in our entire country, it seemed to me, from the ripe ages of a considerable number of its members, that it must have been organized about the time "the morning stars first sang together."

Boston in those days was so good that there were no Saturday night performances, because that would have interfered with baking the beans, practising the hymns, and conning Sunday-school lessons for the morrow. Indeed, if I remember rightly, the Saturday matinee had its first introduction there on that account.

The rehearsals and concerts of our society, being sacred affairs, were held on Sunday nights, and usually had a good attendance, there being no other place in particular for people to go to.

For years the prestige of the Handel and Haydn remained undimmed. Its membership was varied, the female contingent being made up largely of ladies of uncertain age. On the male side, also, there was only a sprinkling of youth, against a background of silver-gray heads and stooping shoulders.

In such a dignified aggregation I was content to take my place as an humble chorus singer, on account of the opportunity it afforded me to familiarize myself with the works of the masters and to hear their finest interpreters. At the triennial festivals European soloists were imported to render—some of them to rend—the masterpieces of sacred music.*

I remember among these Titiens, Rudersdorf, Pappenheim, Parepa-Rosa, Christine Nilsson, Carl Formes, Hermanns and Santley, as names to conjure with. With these meistersingers from abroad, native talent

*Up to the year 1818 the programs presented by the Handel and Haydn Society were made up of miscellaneous sacred selections, but on December 25 of that year the "Messiah" was given complete. So far as may be learned this was the first performance in America of the oratorio in its entirety. Haydn's "Creation" followed in the next year and in 1820 the "Dettingen Te Deum" of Handel was performed. According to the custom of the time, during the early years of its inception the Handel and Haydn Society in the distribution of parts gave the tenor to the women's voices, the air being taken by the men. This state of affairs continued until 1827 when Lowell Mason accepted the presidency of the society and brought about the proper distribution of parts. At the present time the active members number three hundred and ninety-five.—*The American History and Encyclopedia of Music.*

competed, represented by such notabilities as Wetherbee (my own teacher), Adelaide Phillipps, Winch, and our magnificent Whitney, whose singing of the great oratorio roles has never been surpassed.

Reading lately of the completion of an important picture by Thomas Ball, the veteran sculptor-painter, at the age of eighty plus years, I am reminded that he also was one of our leading bass solosits.

Two performances of this Society which stand out from all the rest in delightful recollection were the "Messiah," when Christine Nilsson (this was many years later than the time of which I have been writing) sang the leading soprano role; and the "Elijah," in which the majestic basso, Carl Formes, assumed the part of the prophet.

Nilsson in the soprano solos was so ecstatically inspired that I have never since wished to hear them sung by anyone else. And if there ever was anything more sublime than Formes' declamatory delivery of "Is not his word like a fire?" and his demand to the priests of Baal to "call him louder," it does not come within the scope of my recollection.

Essentially Bostonese are two incidents connected with the history of the Hub's chief musical rendezvous, which may appropriately wind up this Handel and Haydn chapter.

When the great organ — at that time the third largest in the world—was first placed in Music Hall, it was naturally a paramount attraction. To go and hear it

became a solemn duty which no New England conscience could leave unfulfilled. Every Saturday Boston's beauty, intellect and musical culture flocked thither, at twenty-five cents per, to bathe in its rolling flood of harmonies.

After a time, however, the curiosity and yearning were appeased, the attendance dropped off and finally the function degenerated into a gathering at which gossip and domestic discussions were not out of order. On these occasions it took all the power of the loud pedals and cavernous pipes to drown the clatter of tongues that "needed no reviving Sabbath." One day, when the "Johnny Morgan, who played the organ" was thundering away as if bent on shaking the foundations of the Bunker Hill Monument, the competing noise of feminine conversation was equally at its height. Suddenly the organist planted his foot on a soft pedal that instantly hushed the mighty roar to an aeolian whisper, and in the impressive stillness a woman's voice, which couldn't be so quickly shut off, was heard shrieking into her neighbor's ears:

"We fry ours in butter!"

It will be remembered that at the close of the "Messiah"—the oratorio on which I was weaned and brought up—there is a fugue on "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given," ending with the magnificent choral "And His name shall be called Wonderful, Wonderful, the only mighty God, the Prince of Peace."

A countryman came down from Vermont with his

wife to see the "Boston sights," and of course his friends wound up the tour of observation with a visit to the Sunday night performance at the sacred Music Hall. The farmer sat through it all in sphinx-like gravity, and said nothing. But when he reached home, and the other members of the family gathered round the hearthstone to list to the narrative of our hero's adventures in the city, Mr. Hayback hurried over the hairbreadth 'scapes, dangers and temptations he had passed, and then launched forth as follows:

"Wal, b'gosh, that 'ere Messiah show ain't no place for Samanth an' the gals, I kin just tell ye. You knowed what they done there? Why, I tell ye, after they'd been singing out o' the Bible, reverent-like, for about forty-five minutes, the first thing I knowed some two hundred old maids, I reckon, jumped up and yelled out, 'Unto us a child is born!' and with that a lot of old fellows who seemed to be jest a-waiting their chance to chuck in a word edgeways, hollered back 'Wonderful! Wonderful!' Wal, by jings! I reckoned then 'twas 'bout time for me to go, an' I lit right out."

Chapter XII

HARKING BACK TO THE BOSTON THEATER

I BECOME A GALLERY GOD.—REVIEWING THE SILENT PROCESSION.—EDWIN FORREST'S EXECUTION.—DRUM AND FIFE DAYS.—BARNABEE, THE SOLDIER.

"I am a strong believer in the dramatic stage as a test of professional ability.—Henry Clay Barnabee.

IN the fall of the year 1854, when my rush light dimly appeared on the Boston horizon, the big blaze of that imposing temple of the drama, the new Boston Theater, burst upon the gaze of an expectant public. Having tasted dramatic blood on the occasion of my first visit to the city, recounted in one of the preceding chapters, I was one of the expectant. The event did not disappoint. The inaugural play, "The Rivals," showed off to excellent advantage, being presented by a strong stock company, including Mr. and Mrs. John Wood, Mr. and Mrs. John Gilbert, James and Julia Bennett, George Pauncefort, H. F. Daly and Mrs. Hudson Kirby.

As my social and professional engagements at that time were not so numerous as they afterward became, I had a good many "nights off." These I divided impartially between the Boston Theater, just mentioned, and the Museum, where the only William

Warren played. Thus, at a tender age, I developed into a sort of ubiquitous Olympian, or gallery god.

Under the able management of Thomas Barry, the Boston Stock Company gave revivals of the Shakespearian and other standard dramas which, for all-round excellence, is not, and could hardly be, surpassed with all the stage resources of today.

Miss Bennett and Mrs. Wood were both women of vivacity and charm and accomplished actresses in their respective lines. There was open rivalry between them, and on their benefit nights the stall bean-eaters and Harvard College Indians clashed at the box-office, each faction "whooping it up" for their favorite.*

Needless to state, I was in the thickest of the fray. And, just think of it! Fifty cents paid for a seat in the best part of the house. The outlay of a dollar and forty cents, then, meant two theater tickets, two oyster stews, peanuts or peppermints at choice, and 'bus fare.

The difference in prices between fifty years ago and now reminds me of the remark of a justice of the United States Supreme Court, when the colored guide, showing him the Natural Bridge of Virginia from the ravine underneath, said:

"Gen'l George Washington, standin' on dis spot,

* Eugene Tompkins in his "History of the Boston Theater" tells us that it was during a performance of "Medea," April, 1877, that Theodore Roosevelt, afterward President of the United States, was ejected from the gallery for creating a disturbance. He was then a freshman at Harvard College and was "running" for one of the secret societies. He had been ordered to go into the upper gallery of the Boston Theater in evening dress and applaud vociferously in all quiet scenes. This he did faithfully, with the above disastrous effect upon his dignity.

could throw a silver dollah clean to de top of de bridge."

"Very likely," commented the visitor, "for in those days a silver dollar went twice as far as it does now."

What a noble procession of players passes before me in memory's phantasmal review! With the exception of Rachel, as Phèdre, of whom I had but a momentary glimpse, I remember them all vividly.

There was Forrest, of the Herculean physique and deep-toned voice, equally awe-inspiring whether as Richelieu launching the curse of Rome, or as Othello damning the perfidious Iago. There was E. L. Davenport, elegant and refined, with clear-cut diction and easy versatility, perfect alike in expressing the pathetic terror of Richard III while muttering, "The ghosts of undone widows sit upon my arm," and the jollity and tenderness of William the Sailor in "Black-eyed Susan." There was the stately Charlotte Cushman, a baleful Lady Macbeth, a weirdly fascinating Meg Merrilies, and all-moving gentleness as Mrs. Haller.

There was Hackett, the classic comedian beloved of Abraham Lincoln, a Falstaff for whom Shakespeare might have written the part, and then commended its interpreter for adding undreamt-of unction to it. There was the illustrious Italian, Ristori, as Marie Antoinette appealing to the mob from the palace balcony at Versailles, or as Mary Tudor stretching out claw-like, ensanguined hands for England's royal crown. There was Joe Jefferson (and his name will

never die)—then in the first flush of his imaginative creation of a poetic Rip Van Winkle.

And still they come! Charles Mathews, "cool as a cucumber," and as Sheridan's "critic" unique and inimitable; Jean Davenport, Anna Cora Mowatt, ancient of days, but who sitteth throned in glory; Murdoch, the scholarly; Maggie Mitchell, eerie in her flashing images of Fanchon and Jane Eyre; John T. Raymond, whose Colonel Mulberry Sellers—"There's millions in it!"—is the subject of "imitations" today by actors who never saw him; blithe Barney Williams, and "Billy" Florence, with the richest of Irish brogues, as Cap'n Cuttle, whose iron hook was more deft than other men's five fingers; Owens, whose genius in the incarnation of Caleb Plummer made him the peer of Charles Dickens, yet who did not disdain to make Solon Shingle and his "bar'l of apple sass" famous; the incomparable and unapproachable "Marchioness" Lotta, the original dramatic cocktail; Mary Anderson, marble, statuesque and cold, but of compelling voice and Grecian beauty of features; Sothern, who made a high-art etching of Dundreary; Charles Fechter, the romantic beau ideal; Salvini of the Jovian presence and voice; and last named but most revered, Edwin Booth, whose greatness enlarges as it recedes—America's perfect actor, the most princely Hamlet that ever trod the stage.

But these crowding recollections have brought me far beyond my chronological bounds, for the time

being. I must hark back to the Edwin Forrest period, and give the following *ben' trovato* anecdote apropos of his Niagara voice:

Forrest was playing his celebrated "Injun" tragedy, "Metamora," in the last scene of which he has been hunted to earth by the white man, and Captain Church, with a squad of armed men, enters on a bridge above and demands the savage chieftain's surrender. In thunder tones he answers, "I would not turn upon my heel to save my life."

This should have been Captain Church's cue to shout the word "Fire!" whereupon Metamora would have proceeded with his effective business of dying all over the stage. But the Captain Church on this occasion couldn't hear, so he stood impassive and let the big Indian live on. Metamora again roared: "I would not turn upon my heel to save my life." Still nothing doin'. But at this critical moment the prompter, with almost human intelligence, yelled "Fire!" The muskets were discharged and Metamora at last went on with his agonizing death struggle. After the curtain fell, Captain Church *did* hear Forrest mounting to his dressing room with a ponderous tread that boded ill.

"Why didn't you fire when I gave you the cue?" rumbled the mighty one.

"I didn't hear you, sir," replied the culprit with chattering teeth.

"Didn't hear me! didn't hear me, eh? Well, don't you ever die—you won't hear the *last trump!*"

It was William W. Clapp, Jr., who once wrote of Forrest, "There is one who stands out prominent as the great American star, who is to this country what Talma is to France—what Garrick is to England—the noblest representative of his nation's drama—aye, we may say, more the creator of our national drama—for Edwin Forrest has done more, individually, than all the theaters in the country combined to draw forth and reward the talents of native dramatists."

Mr. Forrest, as early as 1829, made his first attempt to encourage native talent by offering a prize of $500 for the best written tragedy founded on American history. The successful competitor was J. A. Stone, Esq., who produced "Metamora," which was first performed in New York, December 15, 1829.

The great Forrest waiting for the discharge of the "deadly" muskets reminds me. Had not the doctors detailed to examine recruits for enlistment pronounced me unfit for military duty, these reminiscences might never have been penned, or else they would have consisted mainly of an account of the "battles, sieges, dangers I had passed," and of my personal bravery - accent on the bravery. I thought the defect was not literally, but slangily "all in my eye," as accurate diagnosis since has never been able to locate a mote or a beam in either optic. But as the authorities decided otherwise, I was compelled to forego the tramp, tramp, tramp behind the spirit-stirring drum, sacrifice all my wife's relatives in the dread arbitrament

of war, and settle down to humdrum civil duties and payment of taxes, which latter were even more certain at that time than death. One could never say "Are we so soon forgot?"

But I found ready employment for my talents and patriotism in benefits galore for the Sanitary Commission, and later for the returning soldiers, wounded, weary and worn.

Professionally I turned this to some account for myself. In my connection with a local theatrical company at Roxbury, I found opportunity to enlarge my repertoire of character parts, as well as of descriptive songs. Of the latter, I was about the only public exponent in this country, forty-five years ago. "Alonzo the Brave," "Bluebeard," and "The Watkins' Evening Party" are among the facetious musical classics which I helped to bring into enduring popularity.

To vary the monotony of stay-at-home life, and to get a little taste of the real article in soldiering, I joined an emergency rifle corps.

We had several days of city camp experience, occupying the same quarters as the Forty-fourth Massachusetts, a nine-months regiment. When the Forty-fourth went to the front, it was styled the "seed cake regiment" by the veterans, on account of being bountifully supplied with goodies from home and its spick and span soldier suits made by Boston tailors.

So great was the jealousy of the three years' men in the North Carolina department, that when the

regiment formed the largest factor of some 2,600 men besieged in Little Washington, North Carolina, by a whole division of Lee's veterans, some one started the scandalous story that in summoning General Foster to surrender or face a bombardment, he advised him to "remove the women and children and the Forty-fourth Massachusetts."

Of course there was no truth in the story, for the Forty-fourth had had its "baptism of fire" the winter before, losing men and doing its whole duty, as, indeed, was recognized by the high commendations of Gen. John G. Foster for their behavior during the siege.

We were left sole occupants of the Boston camp, and every day went through the farce of routine drill. To us it was, indeed, a time that tried men's "soles." Our drill-master had an original way of interpolating remarks to the cadence of the step—such as:

"Left! Left! Left! now—you've—got—it—keep it. Left! Left! Left! Why—in—hell—don't—you—hold your—heads—up? Left! Left! Left!" etc.

Another hero and myself were put in charge of the cooking tent for a day. The ration was boiled rice, and as we did not know the swell character of that cereal, we filled the big camp kettle three quarters full with it, then soused on the water. In half an hour after we started the fire, there was no room for us in the tent—and we had cold rice three times a day during the rest of the campaign.

Everybody was "skeery" in those days. We were

ordered out one night to repel an attack supposed to come from the direction of Cambridge. Whoever the enemy was—whether Confederates, copperheads, or Harvard students—we never knew. Perhaps it was a false alarm, to test our readiness for actual conflict. At all events we started out "armed and equipped as the law directs," and stood

"on the bridge at midnight
As the clocks were striking the hour"

and waited—waited until the witching hour of 4 A.M., without meeting anything more formidable than a milk wagon, a load of market produce, and a string of shoats. After it was all over, an officer bethought him to examine our rifles. It was found that many of us, in nervous haste, had loaded up five or six times, so that if the guns had ever gone off, there would have been great slaughter—at the wrong end.

That episode ended my connection with the army, but it so chanced that many of the felicitations and emoluments which constitute the just reward of bravery came my way. A sprained ankle obliged me to walk with crutches for several weeks, and whenever I appeared in the streets I was taken for a wounded veteran, and, despite my protestations, was overwhelmed with all sorts of attentions, from carfare to a dinner at some fashionable restaurant. After a while this palled upon me, and I kept myself screened from the public gaze, except on special occasions.

One of these sorties I made on the Fourth of July,

1863—the culminating day of the battle of Gettysburg, when the fate of the Union hung trembling in the balance. I can never forget the experience. Everybody was out in the streets, but the stillness of a church pervaded the entire population. People walked about with anxious faces, but seldom spoke. Friends greeted each other with a shake of the hand and a look that spoke volumes. All felt intuitively that the decisive clash had come, and that the outcome must be either a further invasion north by Lee's army, or its rout and retreat.

When that glorious dispatch came from President Lincoln, announcing the repulse of Pickett's division, the breathless anxiety and gloom were dispelled as if by magic. Mighty cheers rent the air, the national colors bloomed and blossomed, and joy and gladness filled all hearts.

The rest of the afternoon and evening, for the general public, was given up to revelry and pandemonium. But in thoughtful homes, quiet though fervent thankfulness was expressed that the clouds had broken at last, that the beginning of the cruel war's end was in sight, and that Webster's patriotic aspiration, "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable," was to be fulfilled, never again to be threatened by internal dissension or foreign foes.

Chapter XIII

AWAKENING OF CRITICAL APPRECIATIONS

THE PNEUMO-GASTRIC NERVE.—"FAME."—A WORD TO YOUNG ACTORS.—INTRODUCING ANNIE LOUISE CARY TO THE PUBLIC.—TRIBUTES FROM NEAR AND FAR.—EFFECT OF NEWSPAPER CRITICISM ON ONE'S FUTURE.

"Whatever may be the temporary applause of men, or the expressions of public opinion, it may be asserted without fear of contradiction that no true and permanent fame can be founded except in labors which promise the happiness of mankind."—Charles Sumner.

AFTER the cruel war was over, and I had been emancipated from the slavery of crutches, the enemy in my midst began to get in his deadly work. The strain I had been under, and my double life of concert-singing and counter-jumping, roused up what my friend 'Gene Field called

"The author of my thousand woes,
The pneumo-gastric nerve."

I also came in for a spell of that mental torture known as nervous prostration. Dread of a sanatorium was one of the cheerful little concomitants of my condition. Indeed, I might have been the actor who consulted a nerve specialist, and was ordered to go to the theater and see a certain funny comedian. "Doctor, that's me!" replied the unfortunate patient; "I am

the comedian to whom you so kindly refer." "Then," the doctor declared, shaking his head, "there is no help for you."

Even my religious bulwarks were battered down. I spent days looking up theological authorities, in search of material for doubt, and I found plenty of it. Dread of a lingering disease, preliminary to moving away to a mansion in the skies before my allotted time should expire, was constantly with me then—and oftentimes since.

Strictly speaking, these apprehensions have been close companions of mine through all the years of my public life, and I have scarcely ever known of their taking a vacation—nearly always being on hand for a scare.

These apprehensions again demonstrated the accidental character of my publicity, for I was told by the doctor that I must abandon at once my daily life of confinement, and *keep out of doors.* I was nothing loath to act upon this advice; the more so as I had achieved something like the position so aptly described by the Rev. Dr. Chapin in his well-remembered mot:

"What do you understand by fame, doctor?" he was asked, after his assured success on the lecture platform.

"Fame," replied the eloquent divine, "means Fifty and my Expenses."*

* Tribute to Dr. Chapin.—"With a magnetic power rarely bestowed upon a mortal, with a richness of vocabulary and of imagery that made manner the equivalent of matter, and with a voice attuned to the awakening of divine echoes in the human soul, Chapin was that man without a peer." —*Christian Herald.*

So I immediately started out for this goal, in order that I might combine business with the process of absorbing into my system copious draughts of a fresh and eager air, mainly in the form of the old reliable east wind.

My formal debut as a professional on the public concert stage took place in 1865 at the Music Hall in Boston, on which (to me) memorable occasion Annie Louise Cary, Mrs. H. M. Smith, Sarah W. Barton, and other artistes brevetted for future fame, also participated.

Meanwhile, there was a brisk and growing demand for my services, "from the center all 'round to the sea," as the back districts were heard from, having heard me, or of me. Being able to sing a serious song as well as a comic one, take part in a duo, trio or quartet, speak a piece, and tell a story, I was considered, even at the advanced price, the cheapest and most economical bargain-package "on the cirkit."

My entertainments were mostly of the musical order, with the foremost local talent. But occasionally I sang such classics as, "Who treads the path of duty" to strictly high-browed music lovers, in conjunction with the Mendelssohn Quintette Club.*

These distinguished engagements added feathers to my cap, likewise wings to the ironical shafts of my

* The Mendelssohn was the first regular instrumental organization of its kind in America, and did pioneer work in introducing high-class music where previously it had been merely talked and written about.

musical contemporaries, who invidiously remarked that "Barnabee was getting like the fly in the molasses—awfully stuck up." Whereas, in reality, that "modesty which forbids my mentioning," etc., was, and still is, my chief asset, if not drawback.

Indeed, I have felt uncomfortably concerned in the writing of these rambling reminiscences, lest the constant (though unavoidable) use of the pronoun "I" should strike the reader as a little too suggestive of the endless procession of telegraph poles along a railway line.

It reminds me of the child of an eminent and pious Bostonian who was wont to prolong grace before meat whenever company happened to be present. One day he spun it out beyond mortal endurance—thanking the Almighty for everything in sight or remembrance, and finally ringing in the children, humbly acknowledging what a priceless gift they were, not forgetting that they had such a good father and mother, and such inestimable privileges—why, I believe he would be going on yet, had he not paused a second for breath, when the eldest child, long restless with the pangs of hunger, threw up his hands in a discouraged way and sighed:

"Oh, Lord, don't you wish you was us!"

But my object, really, is not self-laudation under the pretext of relating pleasant memories of others. What I want to do is to give some more or less valuable excerpts from the log-book of one man's life-voyage;

and in order that these shall have any interest, you must necessarily know what sort of a man is behind them. To this end he is frankly revealing himself as he goes along, after the manner of Jean Jacques Rousseau's "Confessions" (quite a long distance after him, I admit!) or De Quincey's "dreams of self-dope."

And now let me add another word regarding the big I. I have been for many years a stage professional and have had in that time considerable experience; but regarding the method whereby success as an actor may be achieved I confess I have not gathered much general evidence. I have noticed, however, that those who strive earnestly to make progress in their art, and who studiously refrain from annexing themselves to the notion that they are the greatest people in the business—these usually succeed.

Maybe after all the best success recipe is: "Don't get the Big Head."

It has been suggested that from my vantage point of age and supposed experience I should tender some advice to young actors. I would be glad to do so, did I not feel that comment would be invoked as to how, where and whence I derived my knowledge and assurance of being able to teach. A few added lines to those I have already offered will, I think, suffice.

Real actors, like real singers, as I have before stated, are not made. They are like melodies, they are born, discovered and improved. Innate modesty prevents me from suggesting a striking example. An editor

once wrote me asking the favor of three hundred words, stating what constituted the art of acting, a question he was asking of all of the leading actors. I replied that I had never written three hundred words for publication in my life, but I thought I could give him the essence of the true art of acting in considerably less space, and it was this: "The art of acting is the art of seeming natural."

I never learned whether it was published, but I have been quite elated, in reading lately an extract from the words of Coquelin, the great French actor, in which he stated, almost identically, the same idea. At all events I feel quite sure that with the recipes I have given the young actor is fully equipped for Success.

Let us resume.

Those days of my concert impresarioship are full of cherished recollections, especially in the line of old acquaintances and friendships. Of course I revisited my native Portsmouth, a custom which was kept up for several years. At one of these concerts, Annie Louise Cary, one of the world's finest contraltos in her day, made under my management her first bow to the public, which later on bowed down to worship her. I paid her $1200 (minus the two ciphers), and had no reason to begrudge my Hammersteinian outlay.

Miss Cary had, even as a girl, that voice which sank like a golden plummet deep down into the unsounded depths of the human heart. She studied four years in

Europe, came back to the United States with Christine Nilsson, and toured the country in concert and oratorio. Subsequently she won the foremost honors of a Grand Opera career, becoming a lasting memory in such roles as "Amneris," "Azucena," and the like. But a happy marriage to C. M. Raymond ended her public career while still in its full splendor, leaving only the name of a gifted artist and an amiable and lovely woman.*

Charles R. Adams, another of my associates and comrades, also went to Europe, and achieved the honor of becoming the court tenor in Vienna—an imperial sinecure which he held for nine years. All this, however, did not prevent him from telling a good story "on" himself.

Adams was a lyric tenor, with a voice of exquisite quality that, when heard in a small place like the Court Box, was most effective. On his way home to America, a London impresario, feeling that he could earn an honest guinea or two, with a real court singer, engaged him for a performance at Covent Garden. If you have ever been to the Opera there, you know what it meant. It was as if a boy should undertake to sing a lullaby solo in the arena of Madison Square Garden during the horse show.

However, London dearly loves a court singer. A

* "The hardest thing for me to do is to tell an enthusiastic but mistaken girl that her voice will never repay her for time and money spent upon it; but I do not think it wise or right to foster false hopes."—*Annie Louise Cary Raymond, Boston Advertiser, March 2,* 1895.

rousing audience greeted Mr. Adams at Covent Garden, and expectation ran high. Even the gallery gods, those drastic dispensers of blame and praise, were out in full force.

The silver-voiced tenor sang for about five minutes before the sky-line could hear a note. Then a shrill-voiced gamin called out to a distant pal, so that the assembled thousands could get it all distinctly:

"Hi, Chimmie! is it the gintelmun singin', or is it the gas?"

During all this time, I too was in the running as a rising singer of low notes. Already the beginnings were made of that scrap-book library of critical appreciations from which I was to extract consolation in later years, when Ben Wolff wrote of me:

> "Age cannot wither him, nor custom stale
> His infinite monotony."

To offset this lemon, there were many glasses of lemonade. I freely drank all that was offered. Much strength was found in the cup from such musical high priests and prophets as Timothy Dwight, who in the sixties put himself on record as follows:

"This gentleman (Barnabee) with the fine voice and method, singing humorous songs without a taint of coarseness, shows decided talent, if we mistake not, for higher works of art than any he has yet attempted."

Slowly as the public singer in me developed, the professional comedian was of still tardier growth.

Well past my thirtieth milestone, I had as yet no thought or desire of becoming an actor—for my Mercantile Library and "private theatrical" experiences had been gone through in the same purely amateurish spirit which prompted the other boys and girls of our associations.

And yet, unconsciously, I must have carried some sort of an "excelsior" banner in this line, as one of my farcicalities—perhaps Brown in "Mesmerism," or Job Wort in "The Blighted Being"—elicited from a newspaper philosopher this remarkable tribute:

"When Humor died, its departed spirit took up its abode in Barnabee's earthly temple. He is the living skeleton of fun. Comicality is written on his forehead, it laughs from his eyes, it is portrayed in his motion, it plays around his lips, it hides in the dimples of his chin. To look at him is to laugh. Barnabee is a comedian because he can't help it. And the funniest thing of all is to see him attempt to keep from being funny. Gravity sits upon him with as much uneasiness as do the birds of night in lighted halls. Nature made him for a finished comedian and added its blessings in the shape of an excellent voice. When the trumpet sounds on the resurrection morn Barnabee will come up laughing and Gabriel will smile to see him coming."

This sort of thing must have gradually opened my eyes to the fact that, if during a large part of my previous existence I had been plodding in the wrong direction, I was turning into the future path of brightness and hope at last, and Barnabee's Itinerarium promised to be continued until further notice.

BARNABEE AS A HUMORIST

Chicago Tribune, November 10, 1885: "He would be funny bringing a sick child down a five-story ladder out of a burning building."

The Indicator, May 5, 1888: "He can provoke a laugh without making a jumping jack of himself. He is a comedian of the Sothern school—an actor, not an acrobat, who never lowers himself personally to please gallery gods who clamor for monkey tricks."

Sioux City Journal, January 6, 1891: "H. C. Barnabee is irresistibly funny—ripe, droll, finished and full of explosive surprises."

Louisville Courier-Journal, January 30, 1891: "Mr. Barnabee never forces a laugh from his auditors, he invites one."

Kansas City, February 24, 1891: "At all times he is a gentleman, and nothing in his quiet and Jeffersonian wit is ever vulgar or out of place."

San Francisco Post, March 24, 1891: "There can be no doubt that he is the most finished comic opera comedian on the stage. His movements are grace itself, while his fun is as natural as water flowing from a spring. It is a pity that the numerous gentlemen who strut the stage and pretend to be comedians do not take a lesson or two from Mr. Barnabee."

Tacoma Globe, May 1, 1891: "Mr. Barnabee's comedy is always pure and refined."

Duluth Post, May, 1891: "Barnabee is, as ever, funny, not so much in what he says as in how he says it."

Louisville Courier-Journal, December 4, 1891: "His humor is like unto a bottle of old Sillery."

Indianapolis Journal, January 15, 1892: "His wit is pleasing without being vulgar; amuses without appealing to modern slang."

Salt Lake Herald, May 4, 1892: "Barnabee exudes fun as a flower exudes perfume."

Los Angeles, April 19, 1892: "Barnabee sucks the last drop of unctuous humor as a humming bird robs a honeysuckle of its drop of nectar."

Boston Advertiser, December 27, 1892: "Mr. Barnabee's comedy is of the best—pure, artistic, unstained and free from any vulgar taint."

Washington News, January 24, 1893 (dramatic critic): "I have always considered Henry Clay Barnabee the very best of light opera comedians; I see no reason to change that opinion in the slightest degree. He is *facile princeps*. What I like about Barnabee is his originality; he never resorts to buffoonery or to the various tricks of the comic opera singer to provoke laughter. He is natural, easy and, above all, refined."

Chicago Inter-Ocean, February 7, 1893: "Barnabee, who might be called the Gladstone of operatic comedy without offense. His humor is so gentle and spontaneous, *sui generis*, divorced from the froth so frequently blown across the footlights as fun."

Los Angeles Sunday Times, November 17, 1895: "His work has a distinct flavor of native ability for the comic, and his drolleries and foolings for that reason hit the risibilities of his audience in a way that never fails to fetch the ready laugh."

The Times-Democrat, New Orleans, December 7, 1896: "Barnabee's humor is of the true kind. His acting strikes one rather as a funny dream than a stage reality, and that, after all, is the greatest compliment that can be paid."

Victoria Daily Colonist, Victoria, B. C., January 6, 1903: "Everything he says is funny."

There have been few, if any, high class operatic comedians that can be likened to Mr. Barnabee. So happily had he

crept into favor as a mirth-provoker, and closing so well with the temper and humor of his time, that the emphatic approval he received was but a just recognition of his powers.

During his career of unbroken success unique in annals of operatic enterprises, nothing was ever presented by him which did not receive praises from the pens of the ablest of critics as well as the riotous approval of the gallery gods. Many press comments might be printed here. But what's the use? From the mass, the editor has presented enough excerpts to fairly represent the consensus of press opinion. —Editor.

While applause is still ringing in my ears, let me say a few words of the stage generally and the influence upon the actor of harsh, unkindly criticism from the press.

I do not speak of honest adverse criticism upon the actor's work; it is the privilege and duty of journalism in the interest and for the benefit both of the stage and the public to adversely criticize that which is unworthy of praise in plays or players. But what I refer to is the harsh and often cruel manner in which the actor, and even the actress, is pilloried before the public for faults or errors of which he or she may not have been aware, that would be only too gladly corrected if pointed out.

These defects are sometimes referred to, however, in words that the writer of an article would not think of uttering in person to the unfortunate actor or actress, but, a thousand times worse, he spreads it broadcast over the country, humiliating, injuring, sometimes

irretrievably ruining someone's future, for no crime done but an unintentional dramatic error committed.

I often wonder if the thoughtless writer of a cruel criticism knows half of the misery he has caused by his "clever bit of writing." Actors and actresses are the most sensitive people in all this wide world. If the intention of criticism is to correct faults and errors on the stage, to better the work that is done there by intelligent comment on what is wrong in intention or execution, is it right or just or necessary to hold up to merciless censure or humiliating ridicule the unconscious offender? We men can bear it, though it may be unjustly bestowed, but women, women on the stage particularly, are keenly sensitive. I have seen them actually suffer, piteously, from what may be described as the blows of unjust criticism—sometimes unjust in itself, sometimes unjust in the needlessly cruel words in which it is uttered. Is this right? Does it effect any good result? Is it not wholly opposed to all rules of fair, honest, manly criticism, to which latter no actor can or does object?

Oh, editors and critics, let me entreat you, be more kind, more gentle and considerate of the feelings of others. Empty the vitriol from your inkstands and pour in the milk of human kindness and mercy; for the men and women you so bitterly vilify tonight may be in their tombs on the morrow.

Chapter XIV

"TOO LATE FOR THE TRAIN"

"Larn tew wait! This iz a hard gait for a yung man tew travel, but iz the surest way tew git thare."—Josh Billings.

IT also looked like starting in the right direction when a semi-professional friend of mine, who was himself a writer of "home and amateur" plays and a recitationist of large practice, proposed that we should form what is now a "sketch team," and stand in with the innumerable Lyceum Courses which at that time infested the country. The vehicle suggested for this invasion was a bit of playlet, which we had "acted out" together at the Mercantile Library Association, entitled "Too Late for the Train."

Have you, dear reader, ever been too late for the train? It is a mishap which may occur to the best-regulated individual. However, I cannot remember that I ever was left; for, rather than take the awful risk of disappointing an audience and losing my forthcoming wad of the needful, I always took an unseasonably early conveyance, even if only a canal-boat, to the scene of my unfolding.

But it will instantly occur to anyone what dire results, in a thousand ways, might and often do follow upon a delay in getting somewhere. For instance, a

Laura Oakly who played in "Robin Hood"

Carlotta Maconda, original Annabel in "Robin Hood"

Marie Stone, the original Maid Marian in "Robin Hood"

Zelie de Lussan of the Boston Ideals

Jessie Bartlett Davis in the "Serenade"

Grace Reals as Annabel in "Robin Hood"

Helen Bertram, a prima donna with the Bostonians

Carolyn Daniels, who played in "Rob Roy"

Marie Stone in "Mignon"

Ted Hoff, the original Robin Hood

Ted Hoff in costume

Harry Brown as the Town Crier in "Rob Roy"

Arbuckle, the great cornetist, a member of the Barnabee Concert Company

Howard M. Dow, companion, accompanist, guide, philosopher and friend of Henry Clay Barnabee during his entire concert career

Allen C. Hinckley, bass, in "Maid Marian" with the Bostonians

Eugene Cowles, the original Will Scarlett in "Robin Hood"

William Broderick as Cameron Lochiel in "Rob Roy"

W. H. MacDonald in "Pygmalion and Galatea"

Governor's reprieve for a poor wretch about to die, arriving just after the trap has been sprung, or the electric volts turned on—the very thing we read about only in yesterday's papers. Or a promissory note falling due, which failure to liquidate at the exact minute of its maturity might compromise the integrity of good intentions. Or a bride, with orange blossoms and blushes, as per sacred convention, kept waiting at the church, as a telegram announces that the bridegroom has missed his train by just a fraction of a minute! But why suppose—here's a real occurrence right to the point:

A lady was to take the last evening train for Boston from a village seven miles from Middleboro, Mass. She reached the station just in time to see the red lights at the rear of the last car on that last train disappearing around the curve. A solitary man was on the platform. The lady approached him, and asked:

"Can you tell me, please, when the next train for Boston leaves?"

"There isn't any next train tonight, madam," he replied.

"Do you mean to tell me there is no other train tonight."

"Madam, that is the unfortunate fact."

"Where is the nearest hotel?"

"There is no hotel, madam. This is only a small village, and—"

"Well, the nearest boarding house, then," cried the lady, growing impatient and nervous.

"Madam, there is no boarding-house. Everybody here lives in their own home."

"But what am I to do?"

"Madam, I think you will have to stay with the station agent."

"Sir! I am a lady—"

"So is the station agent, madam."

In the environs of Boston there is a "belt" railway line, on which, by starting from the terminal in the morning and transferring judiciously, one can ride pretty nearly all day, round and round and round. One afternoon, just as the train was leaving the station next before Auburndale, an elderly gentleman entered and took the only unoccupied seat, which was beside a lady no longer of uncertain age. She promptly addressed him:

"Sir, I hope you will excuse me. I don't know you, but would you be good enough to put me off this train at the next station?"

"My dear lady," the old gentleman replied, "I would gladly be of service to you; but the fact is, I'm not so young as I used to be. The brakeman, there, is athletic, and I am sure he would do much better than I could."

"Excuse me, sir, but I'll tell you why I asked. At eight o'clock this morning I left my home for Auburndale. I have been riding all day, and have passed my

station half-a-dozen times. Each time the train stops there, I start to get off; but I have rheumatism, and am obliged to descend the steps slowly, and backward. No sooner does my foot touch the platform, than along comes the athletic brakeman, seizes me by the arm, gives me a boost, and yells out, 'All aboard!' And this time I *would* like to stop at Auburndale."

But these illustrations are merely preliminary to the short and simple annals of my own "Too Late for the Train."

The eccentric comedian, Sock (that was me), rushes upon the waiting-room scene, with his carpet-bag, just as a porter's voice on the departing train is heard singing out:

"Last call for supper!" in the buffet car. He cools off in a soliloquy of some seven lengths, when enter Buskin, a manager, who is in the same boat as Sock, having also missed the train. The two have been looking for each other. The railway station becomes a Klaw and Erlanger theatrical booking-agency, and acting stunts are done, with the aid of costumes extracted from the carpet-bag. Hamlet, fricasseed, makes "To be, or not to be," doubly sad in a rhymed travesty, while the Ghost (which was I) obliges with a comic song, and so on. Our epilogue wound up with, "We'll see you again"; and before the audience got a chance to respond, "Not if we see you first," the curtain fell.

This playlet, so long as we kept in the vicinity of Boston and other sophisticated towns, went as well as

could be expected without a lady in the cast. But when we struck the outlying districts, folks thought it rather shivery for a ghost to sing comic selections and recite "Peabody," so the piece was withdrawn for revision which has never yet been satisfactorily completed.

I got my reward in being called "Button-Buster Barnabee" in the newspapers, and one day, in a crowded car, a countryman who had been eyeing me sharply came up and shouted:

"Bean't you the feller they call 'Tew Late fer the Train'? Wall, didn't you show in Gloucester under that diskripshun? I thought so. Say, what was that 'ere song where you throwed fits? I'd give a quarter tew see you do it, right now!"

But here, dear friend, is where we take another train.

Chapter XV

WITH WILLIAM WARREN AT THE BOSTON MUSEUM

McCLANNIN'S BENEFIT.—CONGRATULATIONS FROM WARREN.—WILLIAM WARREN THE PREMIER COMEDIAN.—THE GOLDEN JUBILEE.

William Warren
"Sweet, tender, playful, thoughtful, droll,
His gentle genius still has made
Mirth's perfect sunshine in the soul,
And Pity's shade."
—William Winter.

THE most memorable instance of my veering into the right track, professionally, was when, early in 1866, I received and accepted an invitation from R. F. McClannin, the "Old Man" of the Boston Museum, to appear at his benefit on that historic and hallowed stage.

The Boston Museum! What a pageant of recollections the writing of this name conjures up. It was the first real theater I ever set foot in, on the occasion recounted in a previous chapter, when as a provincial lad from Portsmouth I came on an excursion to Boston to see the world. Here I saw the elder Booth (as Richard III), and heard a full string orchestra for the first time. Here, too, I came under the revelation and

spell of William Warren's matchless art—of which more anon.

The Museum! Let me say a few words concerning the old place I remember so well. Its original title was "Boston Museum and Gallery of Fine Arts." It was opened June 14, 1841, and had, besides its hall of curiosities, a "music saloon" in which concerts and recitations were given, and dioramas and panoramas displayed.

Its "hall of curiosities" had many alcoves filled with stuffed birds of every clime, and variegated plumage. As a matter of fact special emphasis was laid upon the curiosities and their value to the educational world. I remember a number of the early programmes called the attention of visitors to the skill of the taxidermist and announced that "persons having pet birds or quadrupeds they wish preserved can have them mounted in the best manner."

Undoubtedly it was this large mausoleum of the preserved feathery tribe that gave the cue to that New England moss-back, who, when it was up to him to express himself on the subject of cremation, said:

"Why, gol darn it, I don't never want to be cremated. B'gosh, I'd raythor be stuffed and maounted."

Upstairs in the old building was the "wax statuary hall," one hundred feet in length. Among the "wax figgers" exhibited were a number of tableaux. Here one could behold the "Murder of Miss McCrea," "The Three Stages of Intemperance," "The Game of

Life," and other never-to-be-forgotten horrors. Of the many cold-blooded scenes, "The Corsair of the Gulf, or the Black Avenger of the Spanish Main" was a harrowing one. I shall never forget it. There was the villain with drawn dagger, glaring fixedly upon the innocent maiden with flaxen waxen hair, who, with bended knees glued to the floor, supplicating hands and glassy baby-stare, pleaded for a stay of the piratical proceedings.

In 1892 a stop was put to exhibiting the various curiosities, and a few years later, the "wax creations" were disposed of and the mummies were presented to the Boston Art Museum.

When a theater was added to the old Museum's attractions, it proved an immediate success and soon became a fixture amongst Boston's moral spectacles. For years and years many thousands of the good people of that city who would never be seen going to a theater as such, could compromise with their consciences and take it in as a Museum attachment, without violence to their uprightness and religious scruples.

This little fiction of conventionality is characteristic of our race. It has had striking manifestation of late years in the tremendous vogue of "Ben-Hur"— a sacred melodrama which owes its success to the fact that in it the truly good playgoer can see a boating-match, a rescue at sea, a horse-race, and other tabooed sports, yet have the Holy Spirit moving across the stage in the form of a calcium light, so as to harmonize

with Bible-class ideals. An influential Hebrew theatrical manager, one of the principal promoters of this splendid strategic combination, said in my presence, with peculiarly appropriate gestures: "It's only infidels that roast our show!"

Can you tie that for optimistic nerve?

In addition to what I have written regarding the Boston Museum I might say that it was in February, 1843, that dramatic performances were first held there. On September 4 of the same year representations by a regular stock company first began, and at the initial season Miss Adelaide Phillipps, then a mere child, made her debut as "Little Pickle" in "The Spoiled Child."

The same season witnessed the first appearance of John Brougham, W. H. Smith, C. W. Hunt, G. H. Wyatt, G. E. Locke, G. C. Germon, C. Evans, J. M. Field, G. C. Howard, W. L. Ayling, W. F. Johnson, C. H. Saunders, Mrs. W. L. Ayling, Mrs. Maeder, Mrs. J. Reid, Mrs. C. W. Hunt, Mrs. Germon, Miss M. A. Gannon, Mrs. E. Groves, Miss C. Fox (the famous Topsy), Fanny Jones, Mrs. Cramer and Thomas Conner. The last performance given in the old Museum was that of June 1, 1903, when Charles Frohman's Empire Theater Company—the last company to appear in the theater prior to its demolition—presented "Mrs. Dane's Defense," a play in four acts, by Henry Arthur Jones. The "farewell players" were Guy Standing, Oswald Yorke, W. H. Crompton, E. Y. Backus,

William Courtleigh, George Osbourne, Jr., W. B. Barnes, Frederick Raymond, Margaret Anglin, Ethel Hornick, Lillian Thurgate and Sandol Milliken.

But I am wandering into the historic field. I set out to chronicle my first actual histrionic appearance on a real stage, with bona fide actors—my practical butting in to that distinguished company of celebrated players—a procession including, besides Warren the elder and the younger Booth, Mrs. Barrett, Mrs. Farren, Barry Sullivan, G. V. Brooke, Agnes Robertson, Dion Boucicault, and others of name and fame.

At McClannin's benefit, I was cast to play Toby Twinkle in "All That Glitters Is Not Gold," to sing "Simon the Cellarer" in costume and make-up, and to play Cox, in the best-known of Madison Morton's farcical afterpieces, to the Box of the beloved and admired Warren.

It was an unforgettable occasion—one calculated to "harrow up my soul, freeze my young blood, make my knotted and combined locks to part, and each particular hair to stand on end, like quills upon a fretful porcupine," besides setting off my redoubtable pneumogastric nerve in rampageous mood. The physician to whom I confided my fears that something dreadful was going to happen, tried to reassure me by saying that he had reserved two seats in the front row, and that if I should collapse he would arise and apologize to the audience for my "untimely taking-off."

In accordance with the primitive system prevailing

at the Museum, the center of the parquet only was reserved, and that by simple slips of paper. The side and rear seats were open to the rush of the thirty-centers.

To overcome the difficulty, late comers were wont to hire boys to stampede the desirable seats, these to be given up to the actual purchasers before or just after the rise of the curtain. Then there was a tremendous get-up-and-get through the narrow aisles, with recorded casualties, on the gala-night to which I refer, of two broken arms, two dislocated ribs and several faints. Altogether it was a huge success. The battle had been won.

The one thing connected with the performance which I remember clearly is that Mr. Warren congratulated me personally, and said mine was the best first appearance he had ever seen.

Blessings on the memory of that grand old actor! I could never pay the debt I owe him for the innumerable splendid examples he gave me of true and unaffected art. Without disparagement of others, I have always regarded William Warren as the very best comedian it was ever vouchsafed me to see.

I have known of but two who were his peers, and he surpassed them in his wonderful versatility. He could play Sir Anthony Absolute, or Bob Acres, or Sir Harcourt Courtley, or Tony Lumpkin, or Sir Peter Teazle, or Jesse Rural, or Poor Pillicoddy, with equal perfection. The first time I ever saw him was

THE EVENING PROGRAM

Vol. I. Friday, Nov. 9, 1866. No. 10.

BOSTON MUSEUM

Acting Manager, Mr. R. M. Field.

BENEFIT OF

MR. R. F. McCLANNIN,

Upon which occasion the distinguished amateur,

MR. H. C. BARNABEE,

Who has generously volunteered, will make his first appearance upon the regular Stage

This Friday Evening, Nov. 9, 1866,

Will be presented T. & J. M. Morton's beautiful drama, in two acts,

ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD!

Toby Twinkle.....Mr. H. C. Barnabee	Sir Arthur Lascelles.....J. A. Smith
Stephen Plum.....L. R. Shewell	Martin Gibbs.....Miss Annie Clarke
Jasper Plum.....R. F. McClannin	Lady Leatherbridge.....Mrs. J. R. Vincent
Frederick William Plum.....Wm. Harris	Lady Valeria.....Mrs. T. M. Hunter

The Orchestra, conducted by Mr. F. Von Olker, will perform the following varied selections of music:

1. Overture—"On the Rhine".....Lauceu
2. Walzer—"Schmacht Locken".....Fahrbach
3. Obligato Clarinet—"Martha".....Flotow
4. Duet—"Wm. Tell".....Rossini
5. Potpourri On Melodies Of The War.....Von Olker

To be followed, first time this season, by the glorious Warren Farce, The

PHANTOM BREAKFAST

Fitz Mortimer.....Mr. W. Warren	Mrs. Deeperly.....Mrs. T. M. Hunter
Mr. Deeperly.....R. F. McClannin	Selma Jane Sims.....Mrs. R. F. McClannin
Rose.....Mrs. Maria Maeder	

SONG.....''Simon the Cellarer''.....Mr. H. C. Barnabee

To conclude with the famous Farce,

BOX AND COX

Box.....Mr. W. Warren | Cox.....H. C. Barnabee

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PROGRAM ANNOUNCING HENRY CLAY BARNABEE'S FIRST APPEARANCE ON THE PROFESSIONAL STAGE.

as "Friend Waggles; or Where's my Animal?" Dressed in the garb of a countryman, with a worn and bespattered linen coat, he ambled on the stage and told the comical hard-luck story of how his "animile," which he was riding into town, had shied at a hoop-skirt and treated him to a game of see-saw. "I stuck on fer awhile, keepin' hold of mane and tail, then I felt myself on something soft—it was mud, and d—d dirty mud, too." After more than fifty years that figure and those words stand out as distinctly in my mind as though the impression had been fresh but yesterday.

Warren would take up character specialized by visiting comedians, and leave them all at the post. The average actor makes fame and fortune in one or two, or at most half a dozen parts. Warren, in his long career of thirty-six years at the Boston Museum—for he practically never appeared anywhere else—played five hundred and seventy-seven parts, and he touched nothing he did not adorn. Without stopping to think hard, I can name at least twenty-five impersonations of the first magnitude, each of which, under present conditions, might last a starring comedian five seasons.

Mr. Warren played in over thirteen thousand performances at the Museum. A wonderful record. Talk of your emotional actors! Why, he could and did, nightly, draw tears and laughter in the same breath. To observe his finesse and gradations in marking the

many phases of a complicated character was a priceless lesson in the art of acting. In my long and loving study of him, I suppose I absorbed unconsciously at first, and with deliberate intention afterward when I became fired with the spirit of emulation—something of his style and methods, which proved of the greatest service to me in after years.

It would not be surprising if other comedians since widely recognized could trace their inspiration to the same source. Though the son of an Englishman, Warren was the founder of an American tradition which, though never regularly transmitted or conserved, still as an appreciable influence survives.

It may be of interest to the reader to know that Mr. Warren's mother was a sister-in-law to the grandfather of the comedian Joseph Jefferson. The elder Warren was an actor and achieved a reputation as a comedian of high rank. He left England in 1796, and among the passengers on board the same ship was the famous actress Anne Brunton. In 1806, he married Mrs. Merry (nee Anne Brunton) as his second wife. His third wife was Miss Esther Fortune, who on the seventeenth of November, 1812, gave birth to the William Warren of whom we are now speaking.

Such a genius necessarily had its peculiarities. One of these was Warren's habit of occasionally disappearing from the public, as well as the private and managerial gaze, immediately after rehearsal on Monday morning, not to materialize again until the next

Monday night's performance. No one knew where he was, or what he was doing.

To search for him was unavailing. His retreat, like everything else he did, was masterly. But promptly the next Monday night, on he walked, dead letter perfect in his part, delivered the goods, and an adoring audience paid tribute without reserve.

Warren had no use for alleged improvements on the author's lines. He was a purist, and stuck to the original text. Any interpolation or "gag" threw him off his balance.

Once, on some festival occasion, when stars were thick in the cast, and a certain license or latitude prevailed, E. L. Davenport was playing with Warren in that favorite nautical "drammar," "Black-Eyed Susan." Davenport, as William, the Sailor, was relating to the ensemble the exciting story of the capture and dissection of a whale. He should have asked, "What do you suppose we found?" whereupon Warren, as Gnatbrain, would say, "Why, his innerds, I suppose." But on this occasion only, Davenport, with a twinkle in his larboard eye, said—

"What do you suppose we found, *besides his innerds?*"

The look of disgust and dismay on Warren's face as he turned up stage would have paralyzed an Egyptian mummy.

Warren's hair was a personal peculiarity. He had none. This enabled him, on the stage, to wear a wig that did not look wiggy. On the street, his handsome

black peruke was obvious enough, but he was the cynosure of all eyes, the observed of all observers. For my part I admired him so much that I would willingly have braved a trip through the Indian territory, and lost my hair—or would have become as clay in the hands of the potter, and been created over again—if I could have acquired a sufficient resemblance to be mistaken for Warren. But Nature decreed otherwise; and here I am—with gray hair and plenty of it—so that plainly I was never even his heir apparent.

The most shining day in the Boston Museum's historical record as a theater was Saturday, October 28, 1882. On that memorable day, the great Warren testimonial performances were given, in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of his adoption of the stage and of his having reached his seventieth milestone. It was a great day, and I have often regretted enforced absence prevented my presence at the old Museum. "The Heir-at-Law" was presented in the afternoon, with the comedian as Dr. Pangloss; "The School for Scandal," with Warren as Sir Peter Teazle, in the evening.

The occasion, according to one present, was signal in every way, and partly because the comedian, who could almost never be prevailed upon to address his hearers in his own words, made two exquisite little speeches of appreciation to his public admirers and adherents.

At the matinee performance, after the curtain had descended on the third act, calls were made for a speech from the venerable player. Stepping before the footlights, he said in a voice tremulous with emotion:—

"*Ladies and Gentlemen:* It is seldom that it is granted to an actor to assist at the semi-centennial anniversary of his first appearance on the stage. It is a part requiring a great many long rehearsals, and only one performance. [Laughter and applause.] I cannot flatter myself, ladies and gentlemen, that this compliment is due to my humble efforts to amuse you through a long series of years, but rather that it is due to your generosity. I do not think any reminiscences of mine would be very entertaining to you, not being partial to ancient history [laughter], and I have been so long used to appear on these boards as somebody else, that it is not very congenial to me to stand here and talk about myself, making, as the poet says, 'himself to stand the hero of his tale.' [Applause.] I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I have also some acknowledgments to make to the committee of arrangements, to Mr. Frederick P. Vinton, to the gentlemen of the press, to the managers of this theatre, to the members of the Museum company, and to the many kind friends who offered their services—Mr. Barnabee, among the first, Edwin Booth, Lester Wallack, John McCullough, Joseph Jefferson, and last, but not least, Miss Mary Anderson and Mrs. Drew; but previous professional engagements prevented their appearance. Now, thanking you for this and the many, many past favors which are registered where every day I turn the leaf to read them, allow me to bid you farewell." [Loud applause.]

In the evening, Mr. Warren was greeted with an enthusiasm that was little short of frenzy, I am told.

W. H. MacDonald as Indian Chief in "The Ogallalas"

W. H. MacDonald as Indian Chief in "The Ogallalas"

M. W. Whitney as Count of Kanchtukoff in "Fatinitza"

William Warren, the greatest actor and comedian of his generation, in the estimation of Mr. Barnabee

Eugene Field, the beloved poet, who was a dear friend of Mr. Barnabee

Peter Lang, original Guy of Gisborne, "Robin Hood"

W. H. MacDonald in [illegible]

M. W. Whitney [illegible] Arnheim in the "Bohemian Girl"

Tom Karl in the "Bohemian Girl"

Tom Karl

Fred Dixon, who staged "Robin Hood"

Sam L. Studley, musical director, Ideals and Bostonians

Reginald de Koven, composer of "Robin Hood"

James G. Blaine, the Plumed Knight, a dear friend and admirer of Barnabee

W. H. Fessenden as the reporter in "Fatinitza"

Eugene Cowles of the Bostonians

W. H. MacDonald

Harry B. Smith, Librettist of "Robin Hood"

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1882,

in celebration of the

50th ANNIVERSARY

of the adoption of the stage by

MR. WILLIAM WARREN.

Two Grand Performances!

AFTERNOON PERFORMANCE AT 2.

HEIR-AT-LAW.

Dr. Pangloss,	Mr. William Warren
Dick Dowlas,	Mr. Charles Barron
Daniel Dowlas,	Mr. Alfred Hudson
Zekiel Homespun,	Mr. Geo. W. Wilson
Mr. Steadfast,	Mr. James Burrows
Henry Moreland,	Mr. J. B. Mason
Kenrick,	Mr. James Nolan
John,	Mr. Fred. P. Ham
Waiter at "Blue Boar,"	Mr. J. S. Maffitt, Jr.
Waiter at Hotel,	Mr. A. R. Whytal
Cicely Homespun,	Miss Annie Clarke
Deborah Dowlas,	Mrs. J. R. Vincent
Caroline Dormer,	Miss Norah Bartlett

EVENING PERFORMANCE AT 7 3-4.

SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.

Sir Peter Teazle,	Mr. William Warren
Charles Surface,	Mr. Charles Barron
Joseph Surface,	Mr. Geo. R. Parks
Sir Oliver Surface,	Mr. Alfred Hudson
Sir Benjamin Backbite,	Mr. J. B. Mason
Crabtree,	Mr Geo. W. Wilson
Moses,	Mr. Wm. Seymour
Careless (with song),	Mr. Geo. C. Boniface, Jr.
Rowley,	Mr. J. Burrows
Trip,	Mr. J. Nolan
Sir Tobey,	Mr. James R. Pitman
Snake,	Mr. Fred. P. Ham
Sir Harry Bumper,	Mr. J. S. Maffitt, Jr.
Servant to Lady Sneerwell,	Mr. Geo. H. Cohill
Servant to Joseph Surface,	Mr. A. R. Whytal
Lady Teazle,	Miss Annie Clarke
Mrs. Candour,	Mrs. J. R. Vincent
Maria,	Miss Norah Bartlett
Lady Sneerwell,	Miss Kate Ryan

At the close of one of the scenes he addressed the audience as follows:—

"*Ladies and Gentlemen:* Perhaps on such an occasion as this I may be permitted to come nearer to you and address you as patrons and friends. It may be a questionable matter whether the fiftieth anniversary of the year of any man's life should be a matter of congratulation rather than perhaps one of sympathy or condolence. [Laughter and applause.] You seem, however, most emphatically to rank it with the former, and certainly I have no cause to class it with the latter. To have lived in this city of Boston happily for more than five and thirty years, engaged in so good and successful a theater as this, and cheered always by your favor, and then to have that residence crowned by such an assemblage as I see before me, is glory enough for one poor player. [Applause.] My humble efforts have never gained for me any of the great prizes of my profession until now, but failing to reach the summit of Parnassus, it is something to have found so snug a nook in the mountain-side. [Applause.] I came here to thank you, and I do thank you from the very bottom of my heart. I have some grateful acknowledgments to make to others—to the gentlemen of the committee of arrangements as well as to those who presented the painting by the artist; to the gentlemen of the press; to the manager of this theater, and the ladies and gentlemen engaged in it. Also, I should name several distinguished volunteers—Mr. Barnabee, who was the first to offer his services, Edwin Booth, Lester Wallack, John McCullough, Lawrence Barrett, and last, but not least, Miss Mary Anderson and Mrs. John Drew. And now, ladies and gentlemen, I wish that all present within the sound of my voice may by some event in life be made as happy as you have made me today by this event in mine." [Prolonged applause.]

At the conclusion of this short speech, a chorus of fifty ladies and gentlemen stationed behind the scenes began singing "Auld Lang Syne," and the touching strains of the familiar song brought tears to not a few eyes as the slowly descending curtain hid the grand old actor from the view of the audience. I might say more and quote lines from various pens concerning the Golden Jubilee of William Warren. But what's the use?

William Warren was our premier comedian. The pity of it was, the country at large knew next to nothing of him. Like Rufus Choate, the greatest advocate America has ever known, he was content with Boston's "bushel basket," and never hankered to be a national luminary.

Mr. Warren died September 21, 1888, and all that is mortal of the noble gentleman and great actor lies buried in Mt. Auburn Cemetery. Truly, as some critic has remarked, "William Warren played many parts in his time, but he played none better than that of William Warren. The curtain has fallen on all. Hail and farewell!" *

* Mr. Warren mentioned Mr. Barnabee in his "Golden Jubilee Addresses" as you will see by reference. To be mentioned by him publicly was to be a celebrity.—*Editor.*

Chapter XVI

"THE CORK LEG" AND "THE PATENT ARM"

"We can only restore the art of acting by resurrecting its essentials of greatness—the first of these is facial expression."—Henry E. Dixey.

AFTER my first stroke of success at the Museum, I played there several Saturday nights in characters like Henry Dove in "Married Life," and Aminidab Sleek in "The Serious Family," and achieved a few more honors. But even that could not draw me away from my beaten path of playing for myself on the concert, lyceum and entertainment stage.

I now come to the most moving and emotional part of my checkered career. I refer to the start, progress and never-ending finish of "The Cork Leg." This song has become so identified with my name that I have often felt as a presentiment that at last some part of it, say the concluding stanza, would be my epitaph:

"I've told my story both plain and free,
Of the richest merchant that ever could be,
Who never was buried—though dead, you see,
And I've been singing his l-e-g.
Ri tu, di nu, ri tu, di ni nu,
Ri tu, di nu, ri na."

This "Ri tu, di nu" had its premiere introduction, so far as I was concerned, at a musical festival in one of the interior towns of New Hampshire. These

functions were in great vogue in New England, in the middle and latter part of the last century. They were the outlet and expression of the musical talent of the provincial towns. A popular conductor usually presided whose claim to celebrity, perhaps, was accentuated in his being the compiler of a tune book, composed of a mile and a quarter of melody, cut off in lengths of short metre, long metre, common and uncommon metre, and "Meet her by moonlight alone," to suit the purchaser.

This reference does not relate to the sweet and melodious compositions of the venerable Dr. L. O. Emerson, who still delights to recall the memories of those early song-fests, and remains a pre-eminent figure in the development of music in America. We attempted such pretentious things as the "Creation," and Rossini's "Stabat Mater," and then at the end would send the audience home happy with what the weekly Home Journals loved to call "a mirth-provoking selection."

At the matinees, the artists were at liberty to select from the music rolls any old or new number which might suit their voices or their fickle fancies.

So, one fine day, I tried on "The Cork Leg." I had often heard of this descriptive ballad, which was originally brought to this country by Harrison Finn, who used to sing it stationary as it were—that is to say without any movement of the limb, branches or foliage. I believed I could better it by putting in some

modern machinery in the way of facial and muscular, as well as vocal expression.

After a long search through loft and crypt of Oliver Ditson's overladen repository, I unearthed "The Cork Leg." Being long on sentimental ballads, but short on comic songs, I immediately annexed it, and it became a part of my musical self.

If any of my readers ever practised the juvenile accomplishment of rubbing the chest with one hand while patting the top of the head with the other, they may form an idea of the physical difficulties to be overcome before I could keep my head, hair, eyes, lips, arms and legs all going simultaneously, and in different directions; but I mastered the trick.

Whether or not my New Hampshire audience suspected that they were the canine upon which an untried medicine was being tested, I do not know. Certain it is that they received it with a howl of delight, and settled its fate as a fixture in my repertoire.

How many times I have sung that song it would be impossible to compute. Five thousand would be an inside guess. The *Buffalo Enquirer* does a little figuring on this question when it says:—

"The mind of man does not reach beyond the time when Barnabee first sang this amusing ditty. It has been said that this song was the making of Barnabee, but it really was the other way. No one has ever sung or ever will sing it as he does. He must have sung that song more times than James O'Neill has played 'Monte Cristo.'"

Right here let me record that I once had the honor of singing this eccentric ditty in a hall at Concord, Mass., with the august Ralph Waldo Emerson an interested listener among those present. The Sage of New England, for the nonce dismounted from his spiritual pedestal, sat scarcely three feet distant from me. His sphinx-like features relaxed, and his whole anatomy responded in unconscious sympathy to the contagious rhythm.

There is a story told that when the famous danseuse, Fanny Ellsler, hypnotized Boston, Emerson whispered to Margaret Fuller, "Margaret, this is poetry," and she responded soulfully, "Ralph, it is religion!"

My "Cork Leg" did not draw forth quite so rhapsodical an appreciation as that. Nevertheless, I shall always remember with a pleasurable thrill that after my performance, Emerson in his own home took occasion to say, in his benign manner, that he had been delighted with the concert in general, and with "The Cork Leg" in particular.

But it must not be supposed that the cork leg was allowed to pursue its erratic course alone. Oh, no! it must have a running mate, a companion, as it were, to encourage it to do its best, after years of long distance speed.

I cudgelled my brains, every year for a long period, to think even of a distant relation, who could be depended upon to keep up with the procession, but they all proved lame, halt or blind, and I was about giving

up in despair, when my friend Geo. M. Baker, who was with me when the "train" started just before we arrived at the station, leaving us in the annoying situation of being "too late," came to my rescue with, "What's the matter with a Patent Arm?" I grabbed at the suggestion with the wild cry—"Where is it?" And he said, "The manufactory is closed on account of a double strike on the part of the well-*armed* employees, but I think I can put up a job that will answer every purpose"—and, well, I set him to work. The result was "The Patent Arm" became a fixture in my attractions. It was not such a success as its predecessor. for that is going yet, but it proved an excellent "filler in" while the cork leg was bumping along by the roadside, and for several years shared popular applause with the favorite sprinter.

Of the two, the "arm stunt" was the harder to present. The necessary complicated and rapid motion of the supposed artificial limb involved more complex motions of the muscles of the chest, and a larger tax on the lungs than could be supplied at short notice. However, what I lacked in volume of tone, I more than made up in expression of feature, and so pulled through, in the most bona fide manner.

For the benefit of those poor benighted people who have never had the privilege of witnessing the struggle or seeing and hearing the "only Barnabee" depict the rival songs, I append copies of both, and leave it to their imaginations to supply the muscular and facial

contortions, which were inseparable from the effort from start to finish!

THE CORK LEG

I'll tell you a tale now without any flam,
In Holland, there dwelt Mynheer Von Clam,
Who ev'ry morning said "I am
The richest merchant in Rotterdam."
Ri tu, di nu, Ri tu, di ni nu,
Ri tu, di nu, ri na.

One day, when he'd stuff'd him as full as an egg,
A poor relation came to beg,
But he kick'd him out without broaching a keg,
And in kicking him out he broke his leg.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

A surgeon, the first in his vocation,
Came and made a long oration
He wanted a leg for anatomization,
So he finished his job by amputation.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

"Mr. Doctor," says he, when he'd done his work,
"By your sharp knife I lose one fork,
But on two crutches I never will stalk,
For I'll have me a beautiful Leg of Cork."
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

An artist in Rotterdam, 'twould seem,
Had made cork legs his study and theme;
Each joint was as strong as an iron beam,
And the springs were a compound of clock-work and steam.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

The leg was made, and fitted right,
Inspection did the artist invite.
Its fine shape gave Mynheer delight,
And he strapped it on, and screwed it tight.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

He walked thro' squares and pass'd each shop,
Of speed he went to the utmost top;
Each step he took with a bound and a hop,
And he found his leg he could not stop!
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

Horror and fright were in his face,
The neighbors thought he was running a race
He clung to a lamp post to stay his pace,
But the leg wouldn't stay, but kept on the chase,
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

Then he call'd to some men with all his might,
"Oh! stop this leg, or I'm murder'd quite!"
But though they heard him their aid invite,
In less than a minute he was out of sight.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

He ran o'er hill, and dale, and plain,
To ease his weary bones he'd fain,
Did throw himself down—but all in vain,
The leg got up and was off again.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

He walked of days and nights a score,
Of Europe he had made the tour,
He died—but though he was no more,
The leg walked on the same as before!
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

In Holland sometimes it comes in sight,
A skeleton on a cork leg tight;
No cash did the artist's skill requite,
He never was paid—and it served him right.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

I've told my story both plain and free,
Of the richest merchant that could be,
Who never was buried—though dead, you see,
And I've been singing his L. E. G.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

THE PATENT ARM

There was a man in sixty-four
Who hung a shingle at his door:
"Ye who would patent arms secure,
Come buy, come buy, beg alms no more."
Ri tu, di nu, Ri tu, di ni nu,
Ri tu, di nu, ri na.

It was an arm of curious twist—
Muscles to work, and supple wrist,
A bona-fide five-fingered fist
No foe when doubled could resist.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

Inside this arm of rare design
Was hid a dollar steam engine,
Which speed and safety both combine,
And got red hot on spirits of wine.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

Into his shop there came one day
A chap whose arm was shot away;

Who looked it o'er, then cried "Hooray!
With your patent arm I'll march away."
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

His aid the tickled genius lent,
To the soldier' stump 'twas quickly bent;
A valve was ope'd by way of vent,
A screw top turned, and away it went.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

"Aha, she goes!" cried the patentee,
"A finer arm you ne'er did see;
Such a cure deserves a noble fee,
Five hundred in gold pay unto me."
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

Said not a word the soldier chap,
The genius got from his arm a rap
Which came so like a thunder clap,
What could he do but quickly "drap"?
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

Out of the house the soldier flew,
Seeking in vain to turn the screw
And let off steam, which stronger grew,
And sent the arm in a circle new.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

The people scooted from the street,
The horses fled in wild retreat;
A big policeman came to meet
The arm he caught, and changed his beat.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

Then came a squad on capture bent,
Over his head a noose was sent,

Fast pinioned to a cell he went,
To let off steam, perhaps repent.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

Once in the cell, they set him free,
Up came the arm, and down went three;
He banged them 'till they couldn't see,
Beat down the walls and fled in glee.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

He hurried home, 'twas getting late,
His loving spouse stood at the gate;
To his arms she sprang with joy elate,
His arm sprang too, and broke her pate.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

He turned the screw; with an awful whack
Round came the arm, on another tack,
And flew in his face, till alas! alack!
It laid him out flat on his back.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

A crowner's jury quickly roped,
The fallen soldier's boiler ope'd,
And when they found the steam had sloped,
Decided he was telescoped.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

And from that time the rumor ran
A skeleton to walk began;
Who threw out his arm with a lengthy span,
'Twas the ghost of the patent *arm*-y man.
Ri tu, di nu, etc.

Chapter XVII

THE PEACE JUBILEES AND THE APOLLO CLUB

GILMORE'S BAND.—THE FRENCH DAY.—"THE HAYMAKERS."—RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE APOLLO CLUB.

"Music is a gift of God. It will drive away the devil and makes people cheerful. Occupied with it, man forgets all anger, unchastity, pride and other vices. Next to theology I give music the next place and highest praise."—Martin Luther.

THE next happenings that appear on the horizon of my remembrance are the Boston Peace Jubilees. These mighty musical conventions were conceived, developed, inaugurated and conducted by Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore, assisted by Carl Zerrahn, the leader of the Salem Brass Band, and the Berlioz of Boston.

The admiration with which Gilmore and his organization were regarded by the people round about Massachusetts Bay is best epitomized in the case of an old gentleman from Gloucester, who, listening for the first time to the Edison phonograph in a slot conservatory, and hearing a sudden strain of martial music, jerked the rubber tube out of the machine and made a dash for the street, exclaiming: "My God, it's the Salem Brass Band!"

The jubilees were stupendous affairs. The first, in the late sixties, was such a success that it was repeated three years later on a much larger scale. The Music Hall, a veritable Coliseum, held an audience of thirty thousand people, besides the multitudinous chorus of well-nigh twenty thousand singers, recruited from those rural bodies of which I have written. The orchestra consisted of five hundred well-trained instrumentalists. The solos were sung in unison by all of the resident vocalists. Fearful and wonderful loud-pedal effects were obtained by the device—original, I believe, with Mr. Gilmore—of discharging cannon at salient points of the music, by means of an arrangement of electrical keys on the conductor's stand.

Fancy this artillery adjunct applied to the anvil chorus of "Trovatore," or to the refrain of "The Star Spangled Banner"—

> "The rocket's red glare,
> The bombs bursting in air," etc.

Some passages may have been blurred a bit by the notes of the back rows of singers, a quarter of a mile or so distant from the front firing-line, getting there a few bars behind time; but the ensemble was grand and stunning.

The two star features of the occasion were the singing of Mme. Pescha Leutner, the heroic German soprano, and the performances of the foreign bands. Mme. Leutner's magnificent voice completely filled

the vast auditorium; and in one solo she sang a clear, genuine high *G*. It created a sensation, and everybody declared she couldn't have done it but for her well-known and strict attention to the laws of *high-G-ne*.—Pardon.

But I have reserved the biggest and best for the last. The French Day! It is a memory for a lifetime.

The foreign bands engaged for the festival, in addition to the American contingent, were: Godfrey's Grenadier Band from England; the Emperor's German band, and the celebrated band of the Garde Républicain, from Paris. Each had its own day set apart. As they came to the front, they would play various national airs, always to thunderous applause.

On the French Day, the public was wrought up to the highest pitch of expectancy. The Battle of Sedan had been lately fought and lost. The German army had entered Paris. In contrast to the magnanimity of our own General Grant when he met the chivalrous but fallen Lee at Appomattox, the German conquerors had inflicted upon the proud French what seemed the needless humiliation of marching around the Arc de Triomphe.

Every heart was beating in sympathy as the red pantaloons came swinging down to the front. Wild applause greeted them. Then the stillness was intense, as every eye and ear kept on the alert for the first movement of the conductor's baton. "The Marseillaise," or, perhaps, the complimentary intro-

duction of "Hail Columbia" or "The Star Spangled Banner," was what the multitude expected.

Instead, to their unspeakable surprise and delight, out rolled the opening bars of "John Brown's Body"—the eloquent old slave-tune to which Julia Ward Howe wrote her splendid "Battle Hymn of the Republic":

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord!"

The effect was instantaneous. The entire audience as well as the choristers, sprang to their feet, and leaped upon chairs, settees and benches. Hats, canes and umbrellas were frantically waved and flung into the air. The whole assemblage was a mass of whirling enthusiasts. Every handkerchief was a waving flag, every voice a clarion or a megaphone, shouting "Hurrah!" and "Bravo!" and everybody laughed, cried and cheered in the same breath. It was a demonstration "to beat the band."

The Frenchmen were for a moment paralyzed with wonder, and almost swept off their feet. Then they pulled themselves together and completed the piece, only to have it redemanded with a tidal-wave of enthusiasm, while twice twenty thousand voices joined in like the tuned diapason of Niagara.

The remainder of their program was punctuated with cyclones of applause. When it finally ended with the "Marseillaise," there was a general rhapsody of tear-shedding, hand-shaking, and embracing. Everybody felt that it was an emotional crisis not to be

experienced twice in a lifetime, and an unforgettable illustration of the fact that one touch of patriotic sentiment makes the whole world kin.

In the meantime, however, my development was going on regardless of greater things.

What was optimistically called by managerial license an "operatic cantata" had its inception at this period. It was a mongrel, nondescript affair, compounded of gush, nonsense, and impossible scenery, and entitled "The Haymakers."

"The Haymakers," produced at "great expense" (nigh unto a hundred dollars), was the work of a farmer, both in music and in scenario. The "action" consisted of a number of chorus men, supposed to be mowing in a hay-field, swinging imaginary scythes, one behind another. Had the implements been real, only the last man at the rear of the procession could possibly have survived, as all those who preceded would certainly have had their legs amputated, in striking illustration of the Biblical metaphor, "All flesh is grass."

After the cantata had been launched in Boston, it was booked for a road tour in the agricultural districts. I was lured into it for the leading role, by the offer of a sum of money which I had not the moral or financial strength to refuse.

The book called for two farmer's daughters, soprano and contralto, and two hired men, tenor and bass, to fall in love with them, and incidentally to engage in

a series of musical mix-ups, such as duos, trios and quartettes.

Last, but not least, there was my own part, that of Snipkins, a city youth unfamiliar with the country and its ways. I was the sort of chap that came into the village seated beside the Yankee driver on the box of the old stage, rubbering about at the landscape, until the rustic Jehu remarked: "Say, I s'pose if I should go daown to Boston, I'd gawp araound same as yew do up here?"

At any rate "The Haymakers" as far as its record of endurance and prosperity was concerned, was insignificant. Its influence upon the musical spirit of the age would hardly be sufficient to justify a reference in these memographs, except for the fact that it marked my initial experience in the operatic line, and might so be properly rung in as an "abstract and brief chronicle of our time."

The next operatic step, in which I began to get a real foothold in that difficult field was when I got an engagement for the premier role in a quartette opera, written and composed by a leading musician, who enjoyed the further advantage of being himself a director of a theatrical orchestra. Two angels, respectively tenor and baritone, hovered about the enterprise. The prima donna was a young lady then in her budding promise as a debutante—Miss Julia Gaylord, who subsequently gained enviable reputation as a member of Carl Rosa's company, in London.

The two Cadis, in our piece, were practically two types of the modern "grafter"—a word which was not coined until after the person or thing exemplifying it had been extant for many years. Thinly disguised as stage Turks, this pair of worthies watched each other vigilantly in matters of sentiment and business, during the day, but made common cause when there was a passing wayfarer to be robbed under the sheltering cloak of night.

Everybody saw, or thought they recognized in these two Cadis a family likeness to a couple of famous contemporary financiers whose names are to this day a household word. They "took things" easily, such as railroads, franchises, and small aggregations of business capital.

There is not much to relate about the two operatic Cadis. They did very well in Boston and never got stranded in any out-of-the-way one-night stands—for the reason that our company was never sent forward to try the tender mercies of the road. Managers shied at booking the play for various reasons that appeared to us puerile and insufficient, but which, combined, amounted to something tragical.

I may not have realized it at the time, but my light opera habit was slowly and surely becoming chronic, incurable.

It is perhaps superfluous to say that I am fond of music. I love it in every form and exemplification, from the simplest melody to the mighty works of the

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Who on this occasion will sing a large number of

NEW COMIC SONGS.

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ANNA, " " - - - - - - Mrs. Walton.
KATE, Dairy Maid, - - - - - Miss Athena Hatch.
THE FARMER, - - - - - Mr. Jerome C. Butler.
WILLIAM, 1st Assistant, - - - - - Mr. Solon Walton.
JOHN, 2nd Assistant, - - - - Mr. Wingate N. Ilsley.
SNIPKINS, a City Youth, unused to the country, Mr. Barnabee.

TRIO. Mrs. L. E. Martin, Mrs. Walton and Miss Hattie M. Remick.—"When Wandering o'er the Deep," and CHORUS: "Home, Sweet Home."

ECHO QUARTETTE, Mrs. J. C. Plummer and Miss Remick; Messrs. E. B. Goodall and D. C. Smith

QUARTETTE · "Yet fear not we," with CHORUS, "Shrouded in the Sun." Miss Hatch and Mrs. Maloon; Messrs. Thomas S. Nowell and Albert A. Fernald.

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Mr. E. A. TILTON, - - Accompanist.

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masters—though I lay no claim whatever to an exact knowledge, either technical or theoretical.

I once asked a distinguished lady musician who could transcribe an orchestral score for the piano at sight, if there were not a lot of humbug and affectation in the way some people rave over the more difficult and intricate forms of music when it is supposed to be the proper thing to do so. She answered:

"Yes, undoubtedly. Now, I myself, love to sit at the piano and study and vanquish a labyrinthine maze of difficulties, as a mathematician would work out a problem, or a detective unravel a plot—just to see what amazing puzzles a great composer can construct out of those eight notes, and still be within the laws of harmony. But, Mr. Barnabee, I give you my solemn word that I could not be hired to go to a concert-hall and listen to it!"

From that day to this, I have always accorded myself the proud privilege of liking what I like, when and how I like it. If I don't like it, I like to say so; and I am even tolerant enough, I may say, to allow others to apply the same rule to my own modest efforts.

I have written the foregoing for the encouragement of those cautious and retiring souls who are afraid to have opinions or to say their taste is their own, for fear of clashing with others who claim to have been educated up to it.

Once I had a criticism right from the shoulder which

I am not likely to forget. I was up in the rural districts, visiting the lady of my choice, and she took an ingenious pride in trotting me out as a vocalist, for the admiration and wonder of the neighbors. Among those who came to see the show were an old farmer and his wife, whose acquaintance with music had been limited to "Old Hundred" and similar sacred tunes. They came dressed in their most painful finery, and sat bolt upright while I intoned a dramatic aria in my most impressive style, working myself up to a fine frenzy of voice and action at the close. I saw that I had them going. When I had finished, the old fellow slowly drew a red bandanna handkerchief out of his coat-tail pocket, and mopping his brow, handed me this:

"I swaow, I sweat for ye!"

To resume: Loving everything and everybody connected with the cultivation of the divine art, I must confess that my personal predilections are in favor of a contralto voice, as a plummet wherewith to sound the depths of the heart; a violoncello, as the instrumental counterpart of the human voice; a full orchestra, as conveying the noblest and most vital expression of heavenly harmonies grand and uplifting; and—because I can join in with the pent-up energies of my song—I write last, but by no means least, a male choir of trained voices.

All this is but the "prologue to the swelling theme" for the real object of the present chapter—namely,

to mention the part and pride I took in the formation of the Apollo Club of Boston.

It was in the month of June, 1871, that Messrs. John N. Danforth, John H. Stickney and a Mr. Lee discussed a plan for forming in Boston a club of about fifty male singers. Its first meeting took place on Wednesday evening, June 21, between thirty and forty of those united being present. Meetings were held weekly throughout the summer, devoted partly to business under the chairmanship of Mr. A. Parker Browne, and partly to practice under the direction of Mr. Sprague, Dr. Langmaid and Mr. Stickney. At the sixth meeting of the Club, Mr. B. J. Lang was elected Conductor of the organization.

In December, 1871, the first formal concert was given. The members appeared in four concerts each winter, usually at Music Hall, and each concert was repeated at least once. The programmes were necessarily largely vocal, and rendered by members who were either business or professional men, but often included some of the leading church singers, some of whom later attained fame in lyric drama. Occasionally a full orchestral accompaniment to an important piece and nearly always a prominent soloist, either vocal or instrumental, would assist in the formal concerts.

The success of this organization was so pronounced and so rapid, artistically as well as socially, that it found imitators all over the country. I have heard

them in various cities of the United States, and there are societies of similar character in foreign lands; but I have yet to find the precision of ensemble and general effectiveness that ours attained under the zealous and accomplished conductorship of B. J. Lang.

It was to me an unfailing source of satisfaction and delight during the years of its rise and progress. Devotion to its rehearsals and concerts was not merely a duty, but a joy; and my regret was poignant when I had to give them up at the imperative call of other interests, and leave behind the friends who have remained friends ever since. At one of the Apollo concerts within the past few years, I was an invited guest; and though the absence of many a well-remembered face caused a pang, the singing was of the old-time sort, and was so infectious that I could scarcely refrain from "j'inin' in."

Among the soloists who have assisted at concerts during the past forty years have been David Bispham, Pol Plancon, Giuseppe Campanari, Myron Whitney, H. Evan Williams, Emilio de Gogorza, Gwillym Miles, Johanna Gadski, Lillian Blauvelt, Marie Brema, Anito Rio, Mary Hissem de Moss and other vocalists of renown. Such instrumentalists as Franz Kneisel, Timothee Adamowski, Maude Powell, Marie Nichols, Carl Ondricek, Joseph Hofmann, Mme. Szumowska and Anton Hekking have also assisted at various concerts.

I am still an active, though retired, member, and venture to hope that in the not too distant future I may return to the city of my adoption, make application to the music committee, be found qualified, take my place among the basses, and with the rest of the old boys, sing once more to the "Sons of Art."

Chapter XVIII

MELODY IN MUSIC

"Music goes on certain laws and rules; man did not make the laws of music, he has only found them out, and if he be self-willed and break them, there is an end of music instantly."—Ludwig Van Beethoven.

PROBABLY the severest arraignment of the person with a vacuum on the subject of music is found in the words of Lorenzo in the fifth act of "The Merchant of Venice":

> "The man that hath no music in himself,
> Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
> Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;
> The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
> And his affections dark as Erebus.
> Let no such man be trusted."

This is a little hard, we'll admit, on the chap who is hardly to blame for his ignorance; but Lorenzo had no holes in his chapeau, neither did the great master William Shakespeare. What an expanse of vast ignorance, on the subject, must reside in the minds of a large body of men who have proven themselves fit for "treasons, stratagems and spoils," particularly the two latter.

In a few words, I wish to record my unalterable and long-cherished conviction that melody is the heart,

brains and soul of music. Harmony may be the thought "as expressed in a succession of rhythmical chords, and so related together as to form a musical whole, having the unit of what is called a musical thought, at once pleasing to the ear and characteristic in expression"; but melody, pure and simple, is the life-giving blood which quickens its flow and sends it on and on and forever on. Without it there is nothing but the technical and endless repetition and manipulation of phrases which leave nothing to remember and will be heard again and again without leaving an enduring impression. With it the ear and mind are held and "lulled with sounds of sweetest melody."

In all the great symphonies, even the most difficult, and orchestral works, there is, nearly always, some tunes which render them tolerable to the miscellaneous ear and identify them in the mind, so that even Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony" could be readily recognized. The same holds true of overtures. Rossini's "William Tell" and Wagner's "Tannhauser," and a hundred others, are played today and receive the same rapturous applause that hailed them in their first appearances. And they are all questions of remembered melodies.

How about the operas? The English examples—"The Bohemian Girl," "Fra Diavolo"—in its English translation—composed nearly a hundred years ago, are as fresh as when they came from the mind and pen of the composers. "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble

Halls," "The Heart Bowed Down," "Then You'll Remember Me," and the melodies of "Fra Diavolo," which adequately express the situation, draw the well-filled houses and the applause as in days of yore.

Auber, the composer of "Fra Diavolo," remembered the power of Melody by putting one of the world's best with another opera, and the composer of "La Dame Blanche" saved its life, for many years, with "Robin Adair."

"O Promise Me" was a factor in the success of "Robin Hood." It was taken from an old Italian melody, known and sung by every peasant in that lovely land of music. It is said it was unconsciously plagiarized by Reginald De Koven. At all events, it was immortalized by the late Jessie Bartlett Davis. In the nineteen hundred times that we played "Robin Hood," I never neglected to go down into the first entrance and listen to that impressive voice, now forever hushed in this earthly sphere, roll out the appealing words "O Promise Me, O Promise Me."

"Fatinitza" retained its popularity for years by its singable tunes and brilliant action. "The Serenade," with its haunting air, "I love thee, I adore thee, Oh, my heart's life and soul all are thine," "The Angelus," "Woman, lovely woman," Alice Nielsen's "Cupid and I," "Dreaming, dreaming, talking in my sleep" was a score of surpassing loveliness; and Helen Bertram came very near resurrecting "Rob Roy" from

its untimely fate with "My hame is where the heather blooms, the heather blooms sae fresh and fair."

And what about grand opera? "Don Giovanni," one of the oldest and most classical, holds its interest today with "Batti, batti" and "La ci darem." Rossini was a devotee of melody, and Gounod will never die. Verdi, however, outranks them all—his "Il Trovatore," "Rigoletto," "La Traviata," by the drawing power of their ever fresh melodies, his "Aida," by the simpler beauty of its melodies and the dramatic power of its musical conception.

The dramatic fitness of music to a situation wedded to a melody, that goes straight to the heart, is the only form of opera that endures, not for days but for centuries. And there you are! It is just the same with songs. They must have a defined melody or they will languish and die on the shelves of music stores, while the old favorites will come up smiling.

If there is any man who would not like to hear "The Last Rose of Summer" (that is an old air originally called "Oh, Bay of Dublin") once a day for the remainder of his life, I should think he was on the road to "treasons, stratagems and spoils." To hear Marie Stone sing it in the opera of "Martha," or to hear my old friend Arbuckle play it on his muted cornet was to be entranced. Christine Nilsson, the incomparable, made no mistake in her first tour through the country in choosing "Suwanee River" for a contribution to the programs. She sang it as one who

could sing it, and won all hearts. I first heard her sing the oratorio of "The Messiah" and I have never wished to hear it since. I do not wish my memory of her to be infringed upon. She rendered "I know that my Redeemer liveth" as if she *did know it*, and so impressed and convinced her hearers.

I once heard Sims Reeves, the great English tenor, rouse an audience of twelve thousand people, at the Alexandria Palace, into a perfect rhapsody of enthusiasm with his renditions of "The Bay of Biscay O," and if there was ever a concert of any importance in which Adelina Patti appeared and did not sing "Home Sweet Home" it has escaped the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

The "Battle Hymn of the Republic" written by Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, of blessed memory, and sung to the tune of "John Brown's Body" would arouse any audience to an enthusiasm of patriotism; and "Dixie" will excite Northern and Southern audiences to uncontrollable frenzy.

Childhood will respond to old melodies. I once sat at dinner in Denver in company with the Governor of the state and other notables. The daughter of the hostess, a little girl five years of age, was permitted to come to the table, by reason of her youthful and unpremeditated wit. I asked her mother if she would not like to have the little one come to a Saturday matinee of "Robin Hood," and she answered, "Oh, yes, she never was in the theatre but once and that

was to see and hear Denman Thompson. The only thing she remembered was Denman coming through the door at the cry of "Fire!" in his night attire, and with his trunk on his shoulder, and the singing by the boys of "The Old Oaken Bucket."

"Oh," said I, to the little one, "do you know the 'Old Oaken Bucket'?"

"Oh, yes," said she, "I sing it."

"Do you?" said I, as I started to sing one of the stanzas.

Having finished, the child ventured to say that she didn't sing it in the way I presented it. "Oh, don't you," said I, "Pray how do *you* sing it?"

"Oh," said she *very* reprovingly, "I don't sing *at the table!*"

The company collapsed and the comedian joined, for I always *did* enjoy a joke on myself.

When my dear mother was eighty-six years old, I went to Portsmouth, N. H., to see her one day and, as it happened, it was the last time I ever saw her alive. She asked me to take a walk with her, which I did. When we returned to her home, she said, "I have got something I want you to sing for me." She went up stairs and presently came down carrying *one* yellow, faded leaf of an old song book. The song was the old and beautiful one, "Love's Young Dream," which she had kept sacred through all the years and which I sang to her. That was a remembrance of an old melody which brought its tribute of tears.

When Alice Nielsen was a member of our company (The Bostonians), she was devoted to myself and wife, and nearly every night, after a late supper, she would come to our room, take a seat in a rocking chair, and sing to us Irish and "Coon" melodies, as if she were trying to realize Longfellow's beautiful words:

"And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away."

She has now come into her own and is singing in Grand Opera with great and deserved success, for which I am very glad, but I shall remember the "Little Alabama Coon" long after "La Boheme," "Madam Butterfly" and the like, are slumbering in unremembered silence.

The foregoing are brief and simple tributes to the power of melody. I could go on in an unlimited way, but it would transcend the limits of this publication. Let me conclude with a repetition: *Melody is the heart, soul and brains of Music.* Furthermore, Melody was never made or compounded, it was or is *born* and *discovered*, and happy should be the composer who has discovered its abiding place, or into whose soul it has stolen unperceived.

Chapter XIX

ARE YOU A MASON?

I BECOME A MASON.—INTRODUCING MUSIC INTO MASONIC CEREMONIES.—THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ARTILLERY COMPANY.—VISIT OF RICHMOND NO. II ENCAMPMENT.

"Friendship's like musick: two strings tuned alike
Will both stirre, though only one you strike."
—Quarles.

LIKE my father before me, I early embraced the tenets of Freemasonry, and became one of the brethren of the mystic tie, passing through all the stages, exemplifying before the Grand Lodge portions of its work, its acknowledged best delineator until I reached the Thirty-third degree of the Scottish Rite. That is where I still stand, at the present writing.

Whether I had not gained that point of goodness which commanded an entrance to its portals, I am unable to chronicle, but I am not without hope that I may yet be permitted to witness its ceremonies and wear its regalia.

I am glad to say of the institution that if any person can live up to the precepts inculcated in its ceremonies it can be written of him: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright!" But I must also observe that the impression formed from long experience is strong within

me, that the desire and effort to be a man must reside in the man himself, rather than in any institution or order. "So mote it be."

"Touching on and appertaining to" these orders, and in line with my harmonic happenings, I may mention that I, with some other gentlemen, were the pioneers in introducing music into the Masonic ceremonies to emphasize and accentuate the ritual, and it has remained a necessary adjunct ever since.

We were often called upon to journey afar on special occasions, and managed to include some fun on our own account. We had for one of our members a gentleman gifted with the most pronounced nasal organs I have ever seen. A "blow" from that organ was startling, and his snoring a megaphonic sound that would murder sleep. We had all sampled him for a room-mate, and were willing to be excused next time. On one trip to my native home, a new member had just been elected, a sententious chap of few words. We concluded we would allow him to test the ordeal and occupy the room with the nasal trumpet, while the other six roomed together. At the dead hour of the night we were startled by our door opening and in stalked the newly elected in his night garb. He walked to the center of the room with ghostly tread, and to the other six, sitting up in bed with eyes protruding at the apparition, said: "Thunder! Wish you'd come and hear this man snore. Never heard such a ——— noise in my life."

Serenading was our forte, and oft in the stilly night we would sally forth and wind up the evening with the gay Sally Lunn and other concomitants of innocuous mirth.

A wet blanket was at last thrown on our efforts at popularizing open-air nocturnal vocalization, when we got into the wrong street and lined up before the wrong house. This particular place was dark from cellar to garret. We delivered ourselves of several choice excerpts of song, when a light appeared in an upper window. A sash was violently shoved up, and a gruff voice exclaimed:

"How many are there of you down there?"

"Eight," shouted a hungry vocalist, with visions of a sumptuous spread.

"Well, take that, and divide it among you!"

Down came a bucketful of water, and our song died a sputtery, gurgling death by drowning.

In addition to my Masonic affiliations I belonged to the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Boston. To write anything new about this historic body would mean either to ransack history or to draw upon the imagination. It was of English and colonial origin, and with the oldest inhabitant its beginnings are a remote tradition.

In addition to its regular membership of commissioned and non-commissioned officers of the Massachusetts regiments, it has a large contingent of those compelled to choose between military and jury duty.

"The military for mine," quoth I, without hesitation or struggle.

When I joined and began to take a deep interest in the proceedings, the Ancient and Honorable used to hold meetings in the Chauncey Street Church. Its music was of the most ordinary character, and as antique as flintlocks and powder-horns. I helped to change all that, and for years was the only member of the choir who wore a uniform and sang solos.

When the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the company was celebrated, our honored guests from Old England were deprived of the pleasure of seeing and hearing me in all my glory, as at the eleventh hour a "friend of a friend" was clapped into my place as leader, while I languished in a plain listener's pew!

Would not that give you the sensation of a seismic disturbance? Still, I forgive them.

Speaking of Masonic orders reminds me that it was fully established that the last organized body which moved southward for the friendly conquest of Richmond, Va., before the outbreak of the Civil War, was the De Molay Commandery of Knight Templar, of Boston.

Likewise, the first citizen company that came North after the cessation of hostilities, took the Hub by storm, received the keys to the city, and marched in amid the booming of artillery and flinging out of banners on the outer walls, was Richmond No. 2 Encampment, the former hosts of our Southern visit.

Boston turned itself loose on this memorable and joyous occasion, which spanned several golden days. The Sacred Codfish in the old State House smiled a welcome; the Common looked uncommonly inviting; the Old South Church clanged its happy bell, and the antique Cradle of Liberty almost rocked over in its glee.

A military parade, commanded by Gen. Benjamin F. Butler in imposing martial array, marched and then was reviewed. Broadsides of brotherly eloquence were met with rapid fire volleys of love and patriotism. The battle in the banquet hall resulted in a complete demolition of formidable menu batteries, but no greater damage to the army of invaders than that recorded in the stanza by a local troubadour of the time:

"To Boston did a Knight repair,
His armor clean and bright;
He got a cramp—O when and where?
Why, in the middle of the Knight."

And whenever the soul-stirring drum rolled out the "retreat" coffee was served with the roll!

There was a Harbor excursion, with a stop at Deer Island to enable the first reconstruction Governor of Virginia to talk to the lads of the Reform School.

And then, the shore dinner—where the festive clam, purged by patriotic fire, opened its burglar-proof shell and gave up its luscious life on the altar of renewed friendship; where the crustaceous lobster, boiling with

enthusiasm, got red with excitement, threw off its coat, turned cold from exposure, was dreadfully cut up at the idea of salad, but finally yielded to the sacrifice when oil was poured on the troubled vinegar, and soon felt quite at (mayonn) aise.

The exercises finally closed on Bunker Hill, that sacred shrine of all Americans. As the Knights were entering Bunker Hill Park, I walked arm-in-arm with a Southern comrade, who expressed feelingly his emotions on approaching the historic spot. His own eloquence was reinforced by the declamation of Daniel Webster's immortal words at the laying of the monument's cornerstone:

"Let it rise till it meets the sun in his coming. Let the first beam of morning gild its top, and the last rays of parting day linger and play upon its summit."

"You must appreciate the privilege of often coming to muse in such a place as this," he said to me.

"My friend," I replied when he had finished, "I appreciate, applaud and sympathize with all you have said; yet I must be true to my New England conscience and with pain and humiliation confess that though I have lived for more than twenty years within sight of yonder shaft, this is the first time I've ever climbed the mound or entered within the enclosure."

He gasped, smiled faintly and—then the band played.

When the Knights were tired out with as many days' hospitality as they could stand, we sent them to

the protecting care of that Providence which is in Rhode Island, there to discuss Rocky Points and receive new assurances of brotherly love. Finally tired and worn in body, but vivified in heart and soul and mind, they wandered back to the grand old "mother of Presidents," there to rehearse the glories of the occasion, and under the noble and inspiring example of their beloved leader, General Lee, to build up the waste places and to fulfil a high resolve to promote in every way the love and harmony of a great and united people.

Chapter XX

DICKENS, THACKERAY AND OTHER WORTHIES

CHARLES DICKENS VISITS AMERICA.—THACKERAY IS BANQUETED.—THE INIMITABLE BARNES.—JOHN STETSON AND MIKE DOHERTY.—HON. RUFUS CHOATE, "THE INVINCIBLE."—GEN. BENJAMIN F. BUTLER, CARL ZERRAHN, "THE FORGOTTEN," AND CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN.

"We all change, but that's with time! Time does his work honestly, and I don't mind him. A fig for Time! Use him well and he's a hearty fellow, and scorns to have you at a disadvantage."—Charles Dickens.

TWO events which deserve at least a passing notice in this record occurred in the decade of the sixties. In my childhood, boyhood and earliest manhood, I do not remember of being much of a story reader. Indeed, children's literature was very much in embryo in that day and generation, and in fact children were not given a tithe of that attention which obtains in these progressive and happier times. From the old-fashioned wooden cradle which had descended from a former generation and had gotten worn and rickety in the journey, to the entrance to manhood or the "coming out," so to speak, which happened in the most informal manner, it was a sort of go-as-you-please life, modified only by a mild

parental discipline or the restraints imposed by a strict and regular attendance at Sunday School.

The first book, barring the "American Reader," with its mild tales of "'Twas Saturday night, and the lonely widow of the pine cottage sat by her blazing faggots" pattern, of which I have any recollection, was "Nicholas Nickleby," by Charles Dickens.

With what voracity I devoured its wondrous pages! From that time forward I was a most devoted admirer and insatiable reader of Boz's incomparable books. To me, he was and ever is the great master of storytellers.

In addition to his dramatic character-drawing, his unflagging wit and humor, and the pathos to which it is so nearly allied, his vivid descriptive writing, there is always running through his narrative the underlying motive to expose sham and make it ashamed, to hold up to scorn every ignoble attribute in high and low life; and, evinced in gentlest words, his love and tenderness toward suffering humanity. I never in my life met a peculiar or pronounced character that I did not at once wish that Dickens could see him or her, and then describe them.

To be sure, some resentment was cherished because of his strictures upon sundry habits, manners and customs of our beloved land—a few of which have remained just as he saw them. But I was always broad enough to admit that we deserved the criticism, especially in view of the fact that Dickens never spared his own country or countrymen.

With such enthusiasm for his genius, it is not to be wondered that I looked forward with intense eagerness to his visit to Boston, on his second American tour (1868-1869), to seeing the man and hearing him read from his own works. I had that pleasure twice.

The first time was under most favorable circumstances, when he gave the "Christmas Carol" on Christmas eve, December 24, 1868, at the Tremont Temple.

As he stepped out upon the platform—an energetic, nervous figure of medium size, with grizzled hair and beard—I was simply beside myself with pleasurable excitement. Dickens' reading was the most extraordinary *tour de force* of its kind that I ever saw or heard. Long ere that memorable evening was finished, I felt convinced that he was as great an actor as writer.

With no adjuncts of scenery or costume, in conventional evening dress and white tie, with the simple reading-desk and gas-lamp which he always carried with him on his travels, and a red screen for a background, he made every character and situation stand out in sharpest counterfeit presentment. We recognized the various dramatis personae, and knew what they were going to say, before Dickens uttered a word of their speeches. Truly, it was a great evening.

The next time I heard him was in the following April, shortly before his return to England. He was greeted with warmer demonstrations, if possible, than on the occasion of his former readings. At Tremont Temple, this time, a characteristic and charming episode

occurred. His reading-stand had been prettily wreathed in flowers by some of the ladies of Boston. In pleased surprise, Dickens acknowledged this attention with inimitable grace, in something like these words:

"Before allowing Dr. Marigold to relate his story in his own peculiar way, I hesitate to kiss the kind, fair hands, unknown, which have so beautifully decorated my table this evening."

When the time came to say "Good-night," the great English writer uttered a most tender "Farewell." I shall never forget him. Long after the lights were out, I felt that one of the chief desires of my life had been gratified and my most sanguine expectations more than realized.

A reminiscence of Dickens without a similar one of his great contemporary, William Makepeace Thackeray, who visited this country on the same mission, would be thought injustice. I am not prepared to write understandingly about him, having read only one of his books and never having heard him lecture, but I remember that he was everywhere received with distinguished courtesy and hospitality and created a most favorable impression, especially from those who accorded him the higher place. It may be safely stated, however, that his partisans were less numerous and less demonstrative than those of Dickens.

One of Thackeray's Boston experiences was decidedly unique. That good town, which shortly before had lionized Paul Morphy, the chess-player, also, with

admirable impartiality, though doubtful discrimination, leaned forward toward a mountebank of Websterian mien who gave alleged imitations of the noted men of the time. So inflated did this individual become with the idea of his own impressiveness, that he actually approached the author of "The Four Georges" with a proposition to take his place on the platform, deliver his lecture with superior elocutionary effect, and then divide the gate receipts!

Thackeray's reply is on oral record. It was brief and to the point, and for directness and vehemence, has not since been equalled in Boston.

So far as I know, Thackeray did not indulge in any criticisms of America or Americans. He did, however, comment upon our noble native bivalve, the Saddle Rock oyster.

He was being dined and wined at the Tremont House, when his eyes chanced to notice a dish of shell oysters of huge dimensions.

"What d'ye do with 'em?" said he to his next neighbor.

"Why, eat 'em." "How?" and he showed him.

Thackeray looked at them askance, but finally seized a fork, raised it to his mouth, and after a series of facial contortions succeeded in gulping down a big bivalve.

"Well, how do you feel?" asked his neighbor.

"Feel?" ejaculated the author of "Vanity Fair," "Feel? I feel as if I had swallowed a baby!"

My capricious recollection only goes back to the fifties, so far as Boston is concerned.

Those were the days of Barnes—Isaac O. Barnes, of whom there were more popular anecdotes extant, when I entered the contest, than of any vocal competitor.

The history of Boston, or of any Bostonian of the latter half of the Nineteenth Century, would be incomplete without bringing in Barnes.

He was United States marshal here for thirty years or more. Being of the race that "seldom die" and "never resign," he hung on to the office for that length of time, through the respective administrations of various opposing parties, simply by making good guesses on the chances of affairs, and changing his politics at the proper time.

Barnes' individuality was marked. He was no sylph. He weighed three hundred pounds and talked in a piping falsetto voice. His delivery of ordinary language would upset the gravity of anyone not prepared for it. With his play of wit, genial glow of humor, and occasional brilliant flashes of repartee, he was irresistible. Withal, there was a big heart behind his still, small voice, and a quaint philosophy in his most foolish sayings.

At a time when the Fugitive Slave law was in full operation, and Boston was the "underground" station for runaways hiking Canada-wards, Barnes sympathized strongly with the runner, yet at the same time had to put up a large bluff at enforcing the law.

On one occasion, when in a tight place to explain his inertia in the matter of a flagrant case, Barnes assumed the air of one whose confidence had been woefully abused, and said:

"I heard last night there was a black concealed in Joy Street. I went up there and found him, and gave him notice that I would be around to arrest him next morning at 10 o'clock. He promised to be there. When I arrived at the appointed hour, he had gone. D—n 'em! You never can believe a word they say!"

He hated anything in the nature of sham, fakes and show-offs. Funerals were his pet aversion. But when a certain near and dear friend of his passed away, he felt it his duty to attend the obsequies. The name of the deceased was Kidder, but his intimates called him "Kid" for short.

"Kid's" family were divided in their religious beliefs, attending churches of three different denominations. In order that there should be no chances taken as to the ultimate destination of "Kid," all three ministers of these respective churches were invited to participate in the funeral ceremonies. The result was that the services were unconsciously prolonged.

It was a hot day, and Barnes sat there fuming, his countenance covered simultaneously with disgust and perspiration. When at last the pall-bearers moved down the aisle to take charge of the casket and remains, Barnes turned to a man who sat next to him, and said:

"D'you know Kid?"

The man solemnly bowed in the affirmative.

"Then I s'pose you know he was dead sot against all such nonsense as this. Why, if he'd had the running of this here funeral, he'd had himself underground two hours ago!"

It may be gathered from the foregoing that Mr. Barnes was inclined to habitual irreverence, tinged to a degree with profanity. These traits must have been acquired after he came to Boston, for in his native town, in Maine, he was regarded as a model of piety, and a near-saint. Boys starting out to seek their fortunes in this naughty world were mostly sent to Barnes for his good advice and blessing.

On a certain occasion one of Barnes' own nephews called to see him, and asked for the usual send-off. Uncle Isaac took the boy aside and gave him a long moral talk anent the duties and responsibilities of youth. After he had concluded the homily, and given its youthful beneficiary a few moments in which to allow the discourse to soak in, he added the following epilogue:

"Well, Charlie, if you do just as I have told you, you will probably wind up in Heaven at last. But you'll have a poor time here."

Convalescent from an illness which had overtaken him in Washington, D. C., Barnes started to return home by easy stages. As chance would have it, at the very same time the remains of the Arctic explorer, Dr. Elisha Kent Kane, were being transferred to their

final resting place. The ceremonies attendant upon that solemnity were elaborate and long drawn out; and honorary pall-bearers infested the cars, hotels and principal stopping-places along the line.

"Just my infernal luck," muttered the big Bostonian, as he found himself neglected and turned down everywhere on account of the belated honors which were being heaped upon the distinguished "dead ones."

Sick, tired and disgruntled, after slights and rebuffs innumerable, poor Barnes at length boarded a car which happened to be empty. He had scarcely bestowed his ponderous bulk in comfort, when an important individual wearing a white rosette double the size of a prize chrysanthemum on the lapel of his coat, bustled in and said:

"Here, you! this car is reserved for mourners."

"Mourners for what?" inquired Barnes.

"Why, for Dr. Kane."

"Dr. Kane be blowed!" exploded the invalid, as he tumbled off the train and into a convenient hack that stood in waiting.

After the funeral procession had gone on its way, the driver of the vehicle asked him where he should take him. The reply came, in a weak, disgusted treble voice:

"I don't give a whoop, only take me where I'll never meet the blankety-blank remains of Dr. Kane!"

Another worthy who inhabited Boston about the

same time gained in devious ways quite a reputation. John Stetson was his name.

Stetson began his variegated career as a gymnast and sprinter, followed the circus awhile, tried running a bucket shop, became a vaudeville or "variety" impresario at the Howard Athenaeum, and finally found his true metier in elevating the "drammer" as sole proprietor and manager of the Globe Theater, Boston, and lessee of that magnificent ruin known as Booth's Theatre, in New York. Saturnine humor, a queer basilisk eye, a malaprop vocabulary, and some sensational ideas as to stage business, were among Stetson's distinguishing attributes.

He insisted on having more girls put into a tableau vivant of the "Three Graces." In a similar spirit of enterprise, when he contemplated putting on a passion play at his theater, he undertook to forestall criticism by declaring that he would provide "the most reverent show that money could secure"; and as for the twelve apostles—he'd have forty!

He had a storeroom at Booth's Theater filled with costly bric-a-brac, to be used upon occasion as stage *properties*. One night the room was looted by thieves. The next day, a friend who had not heard of this mishap, chanced to ask: "Well, John, how are the acoustic properties of your theater?"

"They were all there, all right," replied Stetson; "but last night thieves broke in, and stole every d— one of them!" There was but one Stetson.

Another character I remember well was Mike Doherty. He was a different stamp of man from Stetson, but equally unique in his way. He was the political boss of the Irish party in Boston and as taciturn as an oyster, but he could control and "deliver" votes, just the same.

One memorable night in Faneuil Hall, when the cradle of liberty was being rocked by a swaying multitude, Mike sat on the front of the platform, smiling complacently on his constituents. Lieutenant Governor Dorsheimer, of New York, a noted "silver-tongued orator" of the time, was there to orate. He arose in Olympian majesty, and, with a magnetic wave of his hand, began:

"Fellow-citizens, Faneuil Hall is full tonight"—

"So's Mike Doherty!" sang out a high-pitched voice from the gallery.

And it was several minutes before the speaker could get a fresh start.

Of Rufus Choate I can say but little, as he lived and died before my acquaintance with the city ripened into intimate relations, but, from all I can gather, he was considered the most powerful advocate of his time, and indeed of any time. He was simply invincible. Anything of a humorous character about a man always attracted me first, and I have always cherished the following. One of his most prominent peculiarities was his penmanship, or rather his lack of it. His writings could only be deciphered by an expert,

or an amanuensis who usually attended him. The first letter of a word was always written plainly, then across the line there followed a zigzag Grecian pattern ending with the last letter. On one occasion he was sitting in his home office, papers scattered about upon the table, examining the pattern of a cornice which a skilled mechanic was coming to saw out for him. Presently, a messenger from the court came to tell him he was wanted. He seized his green bag, stuffed his papers into it and hurried to the scene of his labors. When his case was called, he looked in his bag for his brief and found to his dismay, that, instead of his brief, he had taken the pattern of the cornice. Hurrying back to his home he found the skilled mechanic, with a long piece of thin flat wood, and Mr. Choate's brief before him, trying to *saw it out.* But he won his case.

Benjamin F. Butler, whom I have only noticed as in command of the troops at the reception of the Richmond Commandery, was another celebrity of marked individuality. I enjoyed his personal acquaintance and remember, with great joy, an all-night session at the Revere House, when he, as host, kept the table in a roar of applause and laughter, from "dewy eve" "till morn." Whatever may be said of his war record, as general and diplomat—it was he, I believe, who gave us the phrase "contraband of war" for captured negroes, and in New Orleans, it was generally admitted, on both sides, that he preserved order. He was a

most brilliant man and lawyer. I remember a very "big hit" he made, while serving in Congress. He was speaking, with vehemence, upon some important topic, and was being continually peppered with questions by a gentleman who enjoyed the soubriquet of "Sunset Cox." Butler was plainly annoyed, and presently turning upon his antagonist and waving him away with his hand, said, "Shoo fly, don't bodder me." This brought the house down, and proved the "sunset" of Mr. "Cox." Once, in his own city of Lowell, walking along the street, the family butcher in his wagon hailed him with, "Mr. Butler, I want to ask an opinion." "All right! What is it?"

"Well, sir, if I go to a man's house to deliver goods, and the man's dog jumps into my wagon and gets away with two dollars' worth of meat, isn't the dog's owner liable?" "Certainly, of course." "Well, sir, that's just what happened at *your* house. Your dog grabbed meat worth two dollars." "All right," said Butler, "you owe me three dollars." "How's that?" said the butcher. "Why," said Butler, "easy enough! my fee is five dollars for an opinion. My dog stole two dollars worth of meat, two from five leaves three, doesn't it?" The man paid the money.

Butler was said to have had the Bible at his tongue's end and won many a case with a country jury by his apt quotations.

Another brilliant lawyer was leaving the Court House, just after losing a case when Butler was oppos-

ing counsel, and said forcibly "——him! that's the third time he has beaten me with the Bible!"

Once he was cross-examining a witness and took a seat upon the table. It being the rule that attorneys must stand, the Chief Justice reproved him immediately. Butler swallowed his chagrin and said nothing. After lunch he was reading a paper in the corridor, when the Chief Justice came along, and, no doubt wishing to smooth over the occurrence of the forenoon, said to him, "Ah! Mr. Butler! reading *law*, I presume?" "No! your honor! merely your honor's opinions." This is a very small illustration of Mr. Butler's ready and relentless wit. He was a wonderful man and hit the bull's-eye every time.

I have always and deeply felt that my beloved city did a great act of injustice in not honoring the memory of Carl Zerrahn. He came to this country when quite a young man, played first flute in the Germania Society, but quickly rose from the ranks, became its conductor, and for thirty-five or forty years was the leading spirit in all musical happenings in Boston. During this lengthy period he was the musical director in the *first* Peace Jubilee, the collector of the great chorus in the second Jubilee, the director of the Handel and Haydn Society in all its concerts, and the great triennial festivals, and in general an indispensable factor in orchestral and choral music. The acknowledged leader in the New England festivals, particularly at Worcester, he was known and beloved by all.

When he got tired and worn, he went back to his native country, but all of his old friends and comrades were gone, and, after a short time, he came back here, only to find himself unknown, and—"My God, we are so soon forgot. 'Tis pity it is, 'tis true." Peace be with him!

Lastly, but by no means the least, comes the name of that splendid woman and grand artist, Charlotte Cushman—the greatest this country ever knew. The peer of all who preceded and followed her, including such artists as Siddons, Rachel, Ristori, Janauschek, Terry, Bernhardt and Duse! As Lady Macbeth and Queen Catherine she had no equal, and as Meg Merrilies in "Guy Mannering" she had no rival. Mr. Quincy Kilby, the gentleman who prepared the splendid history of the Boston Theatre, wrote me—"I see that Miss Caroline Crawford in her 'Romantic Days in Old Boston' has your portrait beside that of Charlotte Cushman, which shows you are considered a Boston Institution! I congratulate you." Charlotte Cushman was a Bostonian; and I certainly feel highly complimented by Miss Crawford, in sending me down the centuries by the side of that wonderful woman and grandest of artists, Charlotte Cushman!

Chapter XXI

A PATCHWORK OF SONG AND STORY

THE "UNPROTECTED FEMALE."—"ARABELLA" MAKES A HIT.—THE CRYING CHILD IN THE GALLERY.

"The first step in music study should consist in the ability to imitate accurately what one hears and to hold such a passage in the memory."—Charles Farnsworth.

ANOTHER instalment on my accident theory developed when I found that I could, single-handed, entertain an audience at remunerative prices without having to decimate the gate-money to pay a supporting company.

At the close of a concert in the ancient city of Newburyport, Massachusetts, an influential lady approached me with the offer of an engagement to give a programme consisting entirely of myself and my specialties. I told her I couldn't think of such a thing.

"But," she persisted, "If I could pay you alone as much as you are now getting for your whole troupe, wouldn't that set you to thinking?"

It did. I agreed to "consider the matter." The fact was, that two hundred dollars loomed up before my mind's eye like a lighthouse in a fog—for it was then the topnotch price—and I was so afraid the Lady Croesus would exercise woman's privilege and

change her mind, that I decided at once to relieve it and her purse at one swoop.

In all my public appearances I was accustomed to "act out" my songs, so that I felt reasonably sure of myself for the essential parts of the entertainment. But I needed a "vehicle" to drive on with, so as to keep the straight road, and to arrive in something like schedule time at my destination.

I prevailed upon my partner in the "Too Late for the Train" sketch to write me a poetical prologue about an old-fashioned quilting-party, by way of leading up to the "Patchwork of Song and Story" which I was to furnish. Here are a few of the heroic couplets which his pen produced:

> "For your approval here tonight I lay
> A patchwork of song and story, stitched today.
> I aim to please. If I don't make bull's-eyes,
> Then I'm a bad shot and pass up the prize.
> So with your leave, I'll quickly move along,
> If time's a *lyre*, we'll strike him with a song."

The Quilt was a mix-up of serious and comic pieces in about equal proportions—"The King and the Molly-coddle," and "Simon the Cellarer"; "The Dream of the Reveller," and "Darius Green and His Flying-Machine"; "The Cork Leg," and "Parrhasius," or Poe's "The Raven"; "Ethan Spike's Annexation of Cuba"; and, for a wind-up, "The Unprotected Female"—my first and last appearance in petticoats.

This last-named sketch was presented to me by

Mrs. Howard Paul, the famous English comedienne and prima donna, who created the title role of Offenbach's "Grande Duchesse" in the Anglicized version. Mrs. Paul had no thought of my personally doing that formidable unprotected female in the sketch, but I did—it was another of my little surprises—and it is with pride that I record that the feminine portion of my audiences stood for the caricature, even to the smoothing of my bonnet-strings and the folding of my brochée shawl.

Offering comment on one of my entertainments given in Lyceum Hall, in which I introduced the humorous sketch, one of the critics said among other things:

"Lastly came the grand hit of the evening, 'The Unprotected Female.' Mr. Barnabee appeared upon the stage attired in the style of dress that was the fashion of females in 'ye ancient time,' consisting of a plain striped dress, antique bonnet, with a long white veil, white shawl and an outfit consisting of a satchel, fan and parasol. The composure of his features as he removed his veil and seated himself after 'taking off his things' so affected the audience that a hearty applause was given by everyone present. The character was that of a young (?) female who had refused many offers of heart and hand and was obliged to content herself with merely a review of the past, as time had flown so rapidly that she became an old maid before hardly becoming aware of it. The audience were favored with a short history of a few of her past lovers, which she related while seated. It was concluded with a very piteous bewail, relating to the unprotected state of her sex fashioned into a song and sung by herself."

There was one locality, though—a New Hampshire hamlet where dames of uncertain age and warlike propensities seemed to be in the majority—which did not share in the general appreciation of my character delineation. The suffragettes (poor sufferers) voted it "horrid!"

In Salem, Massachusetts, I struck one of those strange coincidences which checker the artist's career. As I recited the ballad of "Arabella,"—about a beauteous young lady who is admired for her pearly teeth, only one of which has the slight defect of being filled with gold, and who while out yachting becomes seasick and loses the whole set, thus giving away the dread secret of the fake gold filling—I noticed that the audience was almost riotous in an outburst of merriment that lasted fully five minutes, and came back at frequent intervals throughout the entire entertainment.

All to the good, I thought—but why this unwonted hilarity? Was anything wrong with me? I felt a trifle nervous, until the thing was explained. It seems that a few days before there had been a steamboat excursion at reduced rates to Provincetown, Cape Cod; and half of Salem had taken it in. They had no sooner got fairly out to sea than a violent storm broke; and as the waves increased and the boat rolled along, the passengers, between the pangs of seasickness, prayed the captain to put about and make for home again. This he was glad to do, and the boat safely reached her pier—but not before some forty of the voyagers, by

actual count, had parted with their artificial masticating apparatuses!

Thus dentistry in Salem got a great boom—and, incidentally, so did my recitation of "Arabella."

Speaking about being particularly favored in my efforts to entertain an audience reminds me to make mention of the happy hit that I made on the evening of October 20, 1882. It was on a Friday and the Boston Ideal Company was presenting the opera "Patience." During the singing of one of my Bunthorne gems, the piping voice of an infant child was heard just about the time when I was reaching the lines of my part—"This is a little thing of my own." The interruption by the child created a little audible ripple of amusement which rapidly increased to the wildest uproar of merriment, when as *The Observer* states—"the quick-witted Barnabee skipped the lines before the words mentioned and with a comical expression and gesture peculiar to himself, he waved his hand gracefully to the cherub in the gallery, and said, 'That is a little thing of my own!' It was several minutes before the audience was quieted, and at intervals ladies and gentlemen burst into a hearty laugh which became general again as soon as Barnabee added the lines of his part—'but I won't publish it!' Nothing funnier has ever occurred in the opera house, and many laughed until they suffered. The father, mother and child looked inquiringly about, not having heard the words of Bunthorne, and they had no idea

of the fact that they had involuntarily assisted in making a hit for Barnabee."

ECHOES FROM THE DAYS OF "PATCHWORK"

"Barnabee is certainly master of his art, uniting with a rich voice extraordinary powers of rhetoric and imagination. His words of melodious measure and faultless rhyme were witty and humorous indeed; but his wonderful faces, his matchless grimaces, called forth the loudest applause and convulsed the audience with laughter. Even an iceberg would have melted to a smile."—*Providence Press*, 1870.

"His 'Patchwork' is made up of an almost endless variety of musical, comic, and dramatic selections, in each and all of which he is an adept, carrying his audience with him, either in convulsing it with laughter or in hushing it to perfect stillness, through his finely-drawn pathos."—*Lowell Critic.*

"The hall rang with plaudits on his (Barnabee's) every appearance, and encores followed his every piece on the program. The entire *sang froid* and irresistible comicality with which he went through all his songs and recitations brought the house down in laughter that can only be described by calling it a roar."—*Auburn News*, 1870.

"The great triumph of the evening was reserved for Mr. Barnabee, whose magnificent bass carried the audience completely by storm. His 'King and the Miller' was applauded from beginning to end. Applause followed at the end of every verse, and sometimes even threatened to break in on the middle. The last deep note capped the climax, and a thunder of applause called for more."—*Morning Chronicle*, Halifax, N. S., 1871.

"He (Barnabee) is utterly above and beyond any description or criticism of ours, and his memory must ever remain

with us as that of a conundrum to which we have vainly striven to find the correct answer. He has a fine bass voice, beside knowing how to use it, and commands our admiration and applause by his rendering of scientific compositions with the same ease with which he convulses us in his comic songs."—*St. Croix Courier*, St. Stephen, N. B., 1872.

"Mr. Barnabee is very pleasing, both in voice and manner, showing a perfect appreciation of music and verse, either classic or humorous. He is a whole concert troupe himself."—*Calais Advertiser*, 1872.

"Barnabee himself convulsed and brought down the house with his humorous selections. The man who could sit unmoved through one of his songs (if such a one could be found) should go at once and unite his fortunes with that of the Serious Family."—*Schenectady Evening Star*, 1872.

"Few men have the remarkable power that Mr. Barnabee possesses, of entertaining for an hour and a half a large and mixed assembly. Not one in a thousand could do it; and yet this gentleman held a large audience under perfect control, and the last act of the entertainment was as fresh and grateful to the listeners as the first."—*Portland Star*.

"But the immense part of the concert was the Barnabee of the troupe. If he isn't immense, then the concert was not a success. His 'Cork Leg' and 'Mrs. Watkins' Party' were killing."—*Jamestown Journal*.

"His voice is rich, deep and powerful, and wielded with grace and expression. He is also a lyric humorist of the highest order, his 'Alonzo ze Bravo' being the juiciest jumble of music and humor that we have ever heard."—*A Cleveland Critic*, 1870.

"Barnabee was in his happiest mood, and gave some of his very best humorous songs and recitations. 'The Monks of Old,' a rollicking song, was capitally rendered, and in

response to an encore he sung the 'Patent Arm,' a fitting companion to the 'Cork Leg,' which fairly brought down the house. The legend of 'Bluebeard' was most mirth-provoking, and received with a storm of applause."—*Cape Ann Advertiser*, 1874.

"Those who heard and saw will not soon forget nor cease to laugh over the memory of it, and those who neither saw nor heard it and the remaining waggeries and drolleries of the man Barnabee lost the best bit of pure unmingled fun that has ever been offered a Cambridge audience."—*Cambridge, N. Y.*, 1879.

"Mr. Barnabee is called in common parlance the 'great humorist'; but while he has no superior in this department, this is, after all, by no means the real standard by which he should be judged. Behind all his humorous productions and inimitable acting there is ever plainly visible the strong elements of the manly and thorough gentleman, while in the midst of all his humorous songs the musical critic detects that magnificent, tuneful, exactly toned voice, which shows to the best advantage in the most highly finished compositions of the best composers."—*From a Lowell Musical Critic.*

Chapter XXII

INVADING THE WEST

GOING FORTH TO CONQUER.—SIEGE AND FALL OF TROY.—UTICA SURRENDERS.—ELMIRA BESIEGED.—BUFFALO BOMBARDED.—RETURN OF THE INVADERS.

"Westward the course of empire takes its way;
The four first acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day;
Time's noblest offspring is the last."
—Bishop George Berkeley.

IT HAD been gradually glimmering across my lethargic understanding that if I desired to extend my reputation I must increase my sphere of action and allow the mellowing effulgence of my talents to beam upon other communities than those which I had visited during so long a period.

This idea had been percolating through my thought-cells for two or three years, when it received a sudden jolt of acceleration from an acquaintance who had piloted a popular musical organization through the devious bypaths, back-trails and one-night stands of the untrammeled West.

This advance agent of prosperity intimated that a pot of money, besides sundry laurels as good as new, there awaited Henry Clay Barnabee, whenever he might see fit to go after them.

With my accustomed readiness to gather in all that was coming to me, I immediately began preparing to leave my familiar New England haunts, and, as my Uncle Joshua, of Warren, New Hampshire, expressed it, to "explode" the West.

I engaged the services of the then leading New England soprano, Mrs. H. M. Smith, whose "worser half" had agreed to halve with me the expenses and profits, if any, of the long-distance venture. I also enlisted in our enterprise a cornet-player, who was to all musicians of that persuasion what Rubinstein was to pianists. To hear him play a famous masterpiece was to be well-nigh swamped in a soulful flood of melody.

Yet, his name was Arbuckle—*not* Emerson.

There was, however, a cornet-player who bore the latter classical cognomen, and who, as a windjammer in that particular line of brazen pyrotechnics, had acquired in certain quarters a formidable reputation. Crowds went to hear him; and when—like the skipper of the "Julie Plant," in the late Dr. Drummond's Canadian dialect poem—he

> "Blew, blew, blew,
> And then he blew some more,"

they listened and watched with fearsome fascination, as his cheeks and neck swelled and his eyes bulged out, freely predicting that "sometime, something would happen to him sure!" When, in the natural course of human events, Ralph Waldo Emerson, the revered sage

of Concord, passed away, two Boston shopmates were discussing the news in the morning paper, and one of them said:

"I see Emerson is dead."

"No, you don't mean it!" exclaimed the other. "Well, I always thought he would blow his damn head off, some time or other."

Not so with our soloist, the unrivaled Arbuckle. It was as easy for him to play as to breathe. When he gave clarion-voiced expression to Gounod's "Ave Maria," or to the unaffected loveliness of "The Last Rose of Summer," it was indeed "linked sweetness long drawn-out."

Thus equipped, and with the further addition to our forces of a pianist to "accompany" us in both senses of the word, we set out on our westward way, and for a debut undertook the siege of Troy, New York.

In later years, owing perhaps to uncertain hotel accommodations and uninviting surroundings, a wet Sunday in Troy came to be generally regarded by the traveling profession as the Ultima Thule of human misery. But to us, that opening night, it seemed, from a distance, like the vestibule to the treasure-caves of Golconda.

Alas! Whatever the association of that one-night town by the Hudson with the ancient Helen of Greece, may betoken, it is certain that financially we got "Helen" Troy. The amount we drew from the money-pot there was just twenty-nine dollars ($29.00). But,

oh, how that twenty-nine dollar Trojan audience did applaud! They looked upon themselves as our discoverers, and went wild in mutual congratulations.

Utica was our next port, on the Erie Canal. On entering the hotel there, I chanced to recognize in the proprietor a former Bostonian. At the same time I recalled a little trick in the practical-joking line which consisted in catching the stiff brim of my derby hat under my turned-up coat collar, so that, without any perceptible movement on my part, the hat would rise from my head and tumble off behind.

Approaching the proprietor's desk, I timidly inquired the price of accommodations at his hostelry.

"Four dollars and a half a day," he replied, looking up.

"Four dollars and a half a day! Good!" I repeated, while an expression of dismay and horror stole over my face, my hair seemed to stand on end, and my hat fell unheeded to the floor.

The landlord nearly collapsed, then enjoyed such a fit of laughter that he knocked two dollars off his price, and we became lifelong friends. If I were to meet him today, he would immediately cry out:

"Four dollars and a half a day! Good!"

He boomed our concerts for all they were worth, but we failed to take Utica by storm, and, though our receipts for two nights were better than at Troy, we went on our way without any unseemly rejoicing.

Elmira proved no turning point in our financial

fortunes. When I sang my "Planchette" song—so named after a little pseudo-psychic machine, a fad of the hour, which was supposed to answer questions—I asked how much the members of the Barnabee Concert Company would be enabled to salt down in real estate out of the proceeds of that evening's entertainment. The slim house roared with merriment, and made us feel that they heartily appreciated our trick of extracting pleasure out of adversity.

When we were "put off at Buffalo," we met fellow sufferers, and enjoyed for a day or two that company which misery proverbially loves. It was the Santley troupe, from London, consisting, besides the great baritone himself, of M. Patey, Miss Edith Wynne and Mr. Cummings. They were being steered through this country by the only Dolby, who had acted in a similar capacity for Charles Dickens, but with far different financial results.

I inquired if their high-class music, so to speak, hadn't shot just a little over the heads of the natives.

"Why, yes," was the reply. "Over in Titusville, Pennsylvania, owing to Santley's rapidity of utterance, combined with absolute immobility of countenance, they thought 'Oh, Ruddier Than the Cherry,' a comic song, was very badly rendered!"

That was one difficulty, at least, which I managed to avoid. People always knew what I was talking or singing about, and my face gave the cue whether to laugh or cry. Buffalo did both, and received me with

open arms and heart. One young lady came up on the stage after the performance, and said what a pleasure it was to hear the Boston singers *sing*.

And still the receipts kept down on a dead level of insufficiency.

Euclid Avenue—I mean Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago—then in its up-and-down stairs period; St. Louis—the same old smoke hangs over it still; and all the little towns growing between, all yielded the same monotonous net result—personal and artistic success, abundant enthusiasm, fine press notices—But why linger over the chronic treasury deficit?

We gave in all thirty-nine concerts, and we came out at the little end of the—cornet. After paying out all the money we had taken in from the promised land, we had to dig down in our pockets and bring up the savings intended for a summer vacation, which now we shouldn't be able to afford ourselves.

Back East we embarked, sadder, wearier, but a great deal wiser. I was consoled, however, with the thought that I left behind me a wake of pleasant memories and kindly impressions. This has proved a precious certainty in my many return visits West, where a host of friends in word and deed have been "with me" through all the years which have followed, and will always remain the same. Not such a very long time ago a little girl wrote me:

"When the time comes for one of us to leave this earth, I shall miss you, even if I go first. But I shall never feel as

if I'd lost my friend, for ours has not been a friendship of many meetings, anyway, and we've had to do most of our friending at long distance."

After I had entered the operatic field, I seldom visited any of the scenes of my earlier concert exploits but requests were sent up that I should introduce such-and-such a selection, remembered from my former program. This was embarrassing. Fancy the four-wived Pasha in "Fatinitza" warbling "Oh, Loving Heart, Trust On," or the Sheriff of Nottingham holding up "Robin Hood" to do "The Cork Leg!" But it goes to show the grip we had taken on their musical affection.

The day after we arrived home in Boston, the soprano and myself were asked to sing at a funeral, our fee for which was ten dollars, and we grabbed it convulsively. The services were held in the most spacious church in town; and as we looked over the choir rail and saw the pitifully small band of mourners assembled, I could not refrain from whispering to the soprano the same question that she had asked me many a night on the road, as we faced our small and sparsely settled audiences:

"Do you think there are enough to pay expenses?"

And so endeth this lesson.

PROGRAM PRESENTED BY THE BARNABEE CONCERT TROUPE, DECEMBER 1, 1871

Trio—I Navigante, *Randegger*
Mrs. Barry, Mr. Fessenden, Mr. Barnabee

Waltz Song—Robins Come, *Henssler*
Mrs. Smith

Duo—Robin Ruff, *Russell*
Mr. Fessenden, Mr. Barnabee

Song—See the Rivers Flowing, *Proctor*
Mrs. Barry

Song—In Days of Old, *Hatton*
Mr. Barnabee

Quartette—There's One That I Love Dearly, *Kucken*
Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Barry, Mr. Fessenden, Mr. Barnabee

Song—Three Ages of Love, *Loder*
Mr. Fessenden

Song—She Whispers Softly Good-night, *Abt*
Mrs. Barry

Trio—Le Toreador, *Adam*
Mrs. Smith, Mr. Fessenden, Mr. Barnabee

Song—Sleep, My Darling, *Meitzke*
Mrs. Smith

Song—Questa a Quella, *Verdi*
Mr. Fessenden

Song—Wanted, a Governess, *Parry*
Mr. Barnabee

Quartette—Come, my Dearest, *Abt*
Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Barry, Mr. Fessenden, Mr. Barnabee

Chapter XXIII

THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIMES

A LA FRANCAIS.—MISTAKEN BY PRESIDENT HAYES.—"JOSHING" WITH JOSH BILLINGS.

"If the sun rizes in the east and sets in the west, and the bull frog sings sams in the marshes, and thare ain't no pulling hair in the family circle, things are about az near right az yu can git them."—Josh Billings.

BY THIS time my curious readers will be asking what did this alleged comedian do with his glad summer times. Did he sing all summer and dance all winter, as the frugal ant ironically suggested to the frivolous grasshopper in the fable?

Not exactly. But there were many pleasant and restful breaks. For years the wanderlust in me was curbed by strenuous economical considerations; and Portsmouth, or Warner, New Hampshire, would be about my excursion limit. Then, when fortunes and shekels increased, the noble Hudson found in me an enthusiastic admirer, as did picturesque Lake George. I also navigated the St. Lawrence River, with its shoot-the-chute rapids, including the hair-raising Lachine, and sang the Canadian boat song:

"Row, brothers, row, the stream runs fast,
The rapids are near, and the daylight past."

And of course I went ashore at Montreal. Which reminds me:

One Sunday morning we went to the French Cathedral, which is reckoned to seat some eight thousand people. Looking about upstairs, I was struck by the large number of empty pews all placarded with one name, apparently of the person who retained them. And I said within myself: "Now, here is a man after my own heart. His benevolence takes this most commendable form of paying for church sittings for poor sinners."

In the evening, at the Jesuit church, there were a lot more reserved pews, all bearing that same name of the mysterious philanthropist. My heart went out to him. I called an usher, and said:

"Who is this kind old saint that corners pews in the principal places of worship? He must be a power for good in the community."

"Yes, sir," replied the usher, smiling in pity as he had to shatter my fond illusion. "But that 'A Louer' isn't precisely a name, sir. It means 'To let.'"

After this downfall I took up the study of French, and gradually became expert in making myself misunderstood in that polite tongue. When I saw on a New Bedford hotel menu the item, "American cheese a la fromage," I was able to tell the proprietor that the expression "was not just the cheese."

My Canadian summering included a sail up the majestic, mountain-walled Saguenay, and a ramble

through Quebec, which has quaintness to burn. There, on the Plains of Abraham, historians say that General Wolfe, before going to meet Montcalm in battle, read Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," and declared he would rather be the author of that poem than a victorious soldier. Well, he *was* the latter; and as to an immortal elegy, if he did not write one, his heroic death inspired somebody else to do so.

Like a true and loyal New Englander, my thoughts in vacation time for many a year turned fondly toward the White Mountains of the old Granite State. I knew those everlasting hills before railroads had scratched up the landscape, or choked off the old-fashioned, invigorating stage-coach journey.

It was on the breezy summit of Mount Washington that I first encountered a real, live President of the United States. The Hon. Rutherford B. Hayes, during his Presidency in "the seventies," swung round the New England circle, and so timed his visit as to be in conjunction with that of the famous divine for whom he momentarily mistook me.

At that time I was wearing my hair long and gray. I stood on the station platform up there in the clouds, as the car bearing the Presidential party arrived. A quiet, dignified gentleman, "bearded like the pard"—though up to then no "pard" of mine!—alighted, made a dead set for me, grasped my hand and shook it as a candidate before election might have done, and exclaimed:

"Ah! Mr. Beecher, I am so glad to see you!"

I congratulated Mr. Beecher, but of course, I refrained from keeping up the impersonation of the titanic pulpit orator of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn. But President Hayes was willing to accept me at face value as plain Barnabee, and we became close friends —there being little room to spare up there on the pinnacle of New England.

He voiced the thanks of the audience when I gave my entertainment in the evening. I replied that, considering the altitude at which we stood, and the lofty rank of the distinguished spokesman, this was the *highest* compliment I had ever received.

The "Glen" at Gorham has another claim on history in general, and on mine in particular as having been for several summers the meeting place of the Henrys—Henry Shaw, endeared to the world under his familiar pseudonym of "Josh Billings," and "yours truly," Henry Clay Barnabee.

Josh was the original pioneer of simplified spelling, and the only man who ever successfully got away with it in actual practice. He also combined it with a novel and ingenious system of prosody, by which almost any two words could be made to rhyme, simply by changing the orthography of one or both until they mutually corresponded. Take this quotation, for instance, from his "Farmer's Allminax":

"A shiftless man wuz Farmer Snyder,
He spent his time a-drinkin' syder.
Together he worked a kow and a mewl,
And never sent his boys to skewl."

Josh Billings was a tall, slouchy, stoop-shouldered man, and the funniest thing about him was that he did not look or act in the least like a humorist. He wore his hair long, but somehow it seemed to suit his rugged personality. He was the last man on earth that one would ever have thought of calling literary.

I always said he looked like Rubinstein, the pianist — or, rather, as Rubinstein would have looked had he been a "rube."

Much of the quaint Billings philosophy used to gurgle, fresh and sparkling, into my willing ears, long before it won, as matter fit to print, the responsive grin of the great public. It used to pour forth in profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

He loved nature, and knew her most seductive hidden haunts. He believed "Natur never makes enny blunders; when she makes a phool, she means it." The greatest problem given to man to solve, according to Josh, and the one which will ever confront him, is that of "Knowing thyself."

As an angler, he was a wonder. The wary trout had no secrets from him. Like the traditional barefoot boy, he could go out any day with a bent-pin hook and a small-sized bean pole for a rod, and before sundown snake in a bigger string of speckled beauts than all the rest of us could capture with our expensive up-to-date tackle.

Any attempt to write down from memory the droll sayings of Josh Billings is like bringing pebbles away

from the wet seashore, and expecting them still to look like pearls and diamonds after we get them home. There are a few pebbles, however, that every comedian would do well to carry about as souvenirs from Joshua's lake of philosophy. What three lucky stones, for instance, could be of more value to the mirth provoker than these rough pebbles inlaid with pearly truths:

"Thare iz az mutch difference between wit and humor az thare iz between the ile and the essence ov peppermint."

"Thare iz this difference between a jest and a joke—a jest may be kruel, but a joke never iz."

"Every time a man laffs he takes a kink out ov the chain ov life, and thus lengthens it."

Or take, if you will, his definition of laughter:

"Laffter iz the joy ov the soul comeing to the surface to hav a good time."

Nothing better was ever said.

Josh was a fine whist player—one of the kind that can remember everything, and call correctly the last four cards to be played. Once I was looking over his shoulder, hoodooing his game no doubt, when it was his first play, and he led a trump. Now, I always had an idea that trumps should be "hung onto." I asked him why he had played this thusly, and he answered solemnly:

"Barney, when it's your play, and you have five trumps, there are only two reasons why you should fail to lead one."

"Name them," said I.

"Paralysis or apoplexy."

One summer, at that same hotel, a strange and uncommunicative guest took up his abode "in our midst." He was a silent, swarthy, straight-haired individual, with a suspicion of the aborigine about him, only more stolid and stunned, a sort of "brother to the ox." Many were the speculations in which we indulged regarding him; and Josh used to relate "curious details," which I suspected were made up out of the whole cloth.

"Say!" remarked Josh one day, "when that fellow came up on the train, t'other day, he complained that he had a headache from riding backwards on the cars. They asked him why he didn't request the passenger sitting opposite him to exchange seats, and he said he couldn't, because the seat facing him was unoccupied!

"Why, what do you suppose? Someone made him a present of one of these mountain sticks, with a carved head and chamois horn on it. And the first thing he did was to saw off that head, because the stick was too long. When asked why he didn't saw it off at the bottom, instead of at the top, he said the bottom was all right—it was only at the top that the stick was too long."

Finally, we got so curious about the man that we went to the landlord, and Josh said:

"Who is your savage friend, anyway?—the chap

that is always brooding over something, and goes about looking like a war whoop in disguise?"

"Oh," replied our genial host, "that's Old Wampum, as we call him. He is a digger—no, not a Digger Indian, but a delver into all sorts of tribal lore, and he knows the derivation of every copper-colored name between here and the Mississippi."

"There, you see, Barney," said Josh Billings gravely, "we have sadly misjudged the gentleman. It appears he has more knowledge in his head that isn't worth a damn than any two men that ever came up the pike."

After I left Portsmouth, and was in the habit of making frequent visits during the good old summer times, I was continually hearing of an institution that had been added to the attractions of the city—one "Jasper"—a "cullerd pusson," but why "Jasper" no one knew—who was employed, at odd jobs, about the home of my sister who lived on the ragged edge of the town. Jasper attended to the out-of-door work in a frock coat, somewhat the worse for wear, but which, with a bright necktie, accentuated his respectability when he brought the family carriage around to the front door. He was a five footer, curly hair, of course, bright eyes with white surroundings, shiny teeth, and was all together rather a picturesque looking "nig." I can never think of the following occurrence that was told me without indulging in immoderate mirth

The day before the birthday anniversary of my sister's husband the side door bell rang, and my sister,

being near, answered it, and there stood Jasper on the steps, with fear in every line of his countenance, holding a tray with two large round red boxes, with strings hanging from the covers, and looking like two immense cannon fire crackers. Jasper passed up the tray, saying, "Birthday present for Mr. Mendum." My sister, being in great terror of anything of gun powder manufacture, shrank in horror and shrieked, "Take 'em into the field and fire 'em off." Jasper complied, while she rushed upstairs, opened all the windows, to save them from the impact of the explosion, put a shawl over her head and awaited the dread result. Jasper walked out into the field, legs trembling, teeth chattering, eyeballs glistening, set the tray upon the grass, took a match from his pocket, and with one leg stretched out for a quick start, applied the light to one of the strings and ran for the barn as though Satan was after him. When he ventured out he was hailed from the beleaguered garrison with, "Cover 'em with newspapers and try it again!" Jasper did so with the same result. Quick exit! No go! "Then dig a hole and plant them," from the window. After this was done the family serenity was restored, though Jasper told the husband, on the sly, what happened and begged him not to betray him to "Missus."

The next day the family was at dinner with the son. As they took their seats at the table the boy said, "Well, pap, did you get the peppermints I sent you yesterday?"

Josephine Bartlett, who played Dame Durden in "Robin Hood"

Eloise Morgan, a prima donna with the Bostonians, who played Ninnette in "Prince Ananias"

Fatmah Diard, a prima donna with the Bostonians

The charming lyric soprano, Alice Nielsen

Gertrude Zummer, a prima donna with the Bostonians

Camille D'Arville, a prima donna with the Bostonians

Bertha Waltzinger, a prima donna with the Bostonians

Marie Stone, a prima donna with the Bostonians

Juliette Corden, alternat prima donna with Mari Stone, with the Bostonian

The Famous Original Bostonians, at high water mark
The Original Tinkers' Chorus in Robin Hood
Birthplace of Henry Clay Barnabee Portsmouth, N. H.

"Peppermints?" said Pap. "I have seen no peppermints."

"What? Didn't see those two red boxes I sent you filled with peppermints?"

"Well," laughed Pap, "your mother thought they were cannon crackers and had them planted in the field." A shout went up, at the expense of my sister, whose red face acknowledged the blunder, but Jasper watched that planting for a long time, wondering whether cannon crackers or peppermints would sprout.

Chapter XXIV

BOUND FOR "YURRIP"

EXPERIENCES ON THE ATLANTIC.—IN THE LAND OF SHAMROCKS.—KISSING THE BLARNEY STONE.—SOME SURPRISES.

"From each cave and rocky fastness
In its vastness,
Floats some fragment of a song."
—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

THROUGH all my life hitherto, I had steadily cherished the hope of some day invading "furrin parts." I can remember when Europe seemed as far off as Heaven, and, with my income, the latter locality was quite as accessible. But now after a persistent "saving up" till I was slightly "ahead of the game," I thought it about time for the realization of my dream.

It was in 1878, the year of the Paris Exposition, that on the tenth day of May, had you been aboard the steamship "Germanic," you would have met "yours truly" in company with his wife bound for the land of historic murders, monarchs and museums.

Now "Yurrip" has been done so much and so often in every conceivable and inconceivable way, that it is no wonder the old "Continong" betrays signs of

wear and tear. I cannot hope to add anything new or original in the way of description or moralization, nor to change with my graphic pen the impressions already prevailing as to the countries of the Old World.

But to me the trip does stand as a sort of "Midway Plaisance" in my life journey and I cannot be restrained from exploiting a few chapters from my log.

My first real acquaintance with the Atlantic Ocean was when, on climbing up to the deck after a blank period covering many hours, I gazed around at the water-boundary of the horizon, and involuntarily exclaimed with the old lady who always got to the church vestry lunch a little late, and found to her dismay that the eatables were all devoured, but there was plenty of coffee:

"Well! I'm glad to be *once* where there's enough of one thing!"

The staunch and gallant ship made the run in seven days and nineteen hours. Indeed, she was a staunch ship—I know this because I bumped my head against various parts of her, and could not make the slightest impression—on the ship I mean. Let me state, however, that I think I know what I am talking about when I say I don't hanker for any more Atlantic Ocean in mine. My "calm-as-a-mill-pond" theory vanished the second day out. On that day Mrs. Barnabee retired between spasms to "the seclusion which a cabin grants," to spend the remainder of the voyage in vain regrets at having ever left her happy

home. I paced the promenade alone, dropping things over the bow of the ship and then following them back to the stern, so as to get a line on the day's run, and perhaps have the ghost of a show in the pool.

"Try not to eat," the steward said,
"But hie you to your little bed,
And there repress your *rising tide*,"
But out it gushed in spite of pride.
E-u-u-r-r-o-o-p-p-e.

"Beware the stateroom's lonely cell,
Beware of victuals, sight or smell,"
This was the doctor's kind good-night.
A voice replied in accents light,
E-u-u-r-r-o-o-p-p-e.

We met no wrecks or derelicts, save those we carried on board. As a matter of fact we seldom passed a vessel, and about the only thing to relieve the monotony of the ocean's gray expanse was an occasional meeting with a school of porpoises, out at recess, taking part in aquatic sports. It was the same old round from start to finish:

Steamer chair—promenade—breakfast.
Steamer chair—promenade—lunch.
Steamer chair—promenade—dinner.
Steamer chair—promenade—bedtime.

and then your lonely coffin (that's what it seemed like) till the chug-chug-chug of the iron screws awoke you to start life over again on the morrow.

I might confess that I didn't get much sleep the

first few nights. To tell the truth the thought of being out upon that waste of water without any place to tie up to, or a chance to run in case of fire, was a bit oppressive. It was a relief to hear the sound of the ship's bells proclaiming the hour, or even the sailors singing "Roll a Man Down." Later I became so hardened that in after years when a vessel in which I was riding was struck by a tidal wave, I didn't turn out of my berth to find out what had happened.

There was open communication over the tops of the berths, on the Germanic, and by this means I made the acquaintance of the only baby on board. I could hear her cooing early every morning, and, as I took the liberty upon myself of cooing back, we got so that we recognized each other. In fact, we got to be very good friends. Years after, in the foyer of the Casino, on Broadway, New York City, a tall and beauteous demoiselle greeted me with:

"You don't know me, do you, Mr. Barnabee? Well, I was the kid on the Germanic."

The smoking-room on board an ocean liner in those days was much smaller than at present, and everybody soon got acquainted with everybody else. I established myself as quite a favorite by my faculty of being able to inject some anecdotes into the ancient-of-days assortment warmed up and served daily to those willing to receive. The character of most of the givers and receivers has been outlived by one grim old gentleman, who, like Jack Horner, sat in the corner and

listened all day long, but who never cracked a smile nor articulated a sound. On Saturday night, near the end of the voyage, we smoked out this mummified person, and commanded him to stand and deliver—something, anything.

"Well, gentlemen," said he, "I admit I have been rather backward in coming forward. But I can't sing a song, nor tell a story, so I'll have to ask you a conundrum: 'Why am I like a Christmas turkey?' "

We all surrendered, as he edged warily to the door, when he roared out, "Because I'm stuffed with chestnuts!"

Apropos of this finished sarcasm, it is related that a distinguished New York gentleman once visited Egypt, and the authorities, learning of his standing at home, trotted out a three thousand year old mummy for his edification. The defunct monarch had a pedigree about as long as his age, and when the attendant had finished his discourse, the visitor turned to his friend who had accompanied him and remarked, "This is all very interesting. Perhaps if I could address this king so wrapped up in himself in the language of that olden time he might reply."

"Well, Chauncey," said his friend, "why don't you spring that story on him you told me this morning?"

An impressive silence reigned for a few moments and the *statoo* was bumpety bumped back to its sarcophagus.

The waiter at our table was another individual I

cannot forget. He was the first specimen we ever saw that belonged to the cockney class. With his "'am an' heggs, sir," "'ot water, sir," and when the turkey gave out, "hit his finished, sir," he was a circus for us. That same waiter belonged to that band which introduced us to the system of feeing which later prevailed to such an extent that I came to regard the extended (and itching) palm as the national attitude, and whenever I came in contact with a "statoo," I felt an irresistible impulse to place a coin in the nerveless fingers.

One day, while in mid-ocean, we encountered a terrific storm. (Bon voyage? Bosh!) The sea rose and fell. The hull of a large vessel that we passed within a few hundred yards, went, at times, completely out of sight. Fact! We stood, alternately, on our feet and heads, exercises eminently fit for a gymnast but rather disconcerting to a dignified Bostonian.

We had arranged to give a concert that night, but it had to be postponed, first, because there was no audience and secondly, there was not a performer in sight. It, however, came off the evening before we were due at the first stopping place. And even then, the vessel was decidedly above the usual concert *pitch.*

An intrusion occurred in the first number of the programme and the intruder did not take a departure till everybody had gone back to their little beds.

The first soloist had hardly started on the first

phrases when the ship ran into a fog *bank*, the fog horn started its t-o-o-o-o-ot and vocal notes after that were no good. The audience laughed, the performer reddened, got embarrassed but stuck to his post. Finally, he finished and received the congratulations of the audience.

The next victim fared no better. He began—"Kathleen Mavourneen, the gray dawn is breaking, The horn of the hunter is to-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-t—on the hill, etc.,"—till Kathleen came to a sad end.

Just about this time, strange as it may seem, I had a bright idea. I took out my watch and timed the tooter. I found there was quite a space between the toots, which were periodically regular, and thus, by a rapid transit enunciation, I could head 'em off. When the corps had all had a try at it, I stepped forward and said—

"Ladies and gentlemen: There seems to be a *fog horn conclusion* that this tooter is to blow us to a standstill, but not *me*. I have entered into a conspiracy with my watch to beat it out. Now, I will wait till the next toot." Then she blew!

"Make your bets while the horn is sounding.
T——o——o——o——o——o——o——o——o——o
All ready! Now we are off,"
o——o——o——o——o—t
and I finished my song as many as three laps ahead amid great applause.

"Next one will be a handicap. I will give

T——o——o——o——o——o————o——o——o
it fifteen seconds before I start.
———o———o————o———o

"Here goes for the three fellows reciting 'Richard the Third,' " and just as I said "to the lascivious pleaings of sum fellars flewt," the steam flute struck in—
t—o—o—o—o—o—o—o—o—o—o—o—ot.

"Now the next is a nip and tuck, twelve verses with a refrain. Double your bets and I take one half of the winnings. Is it a go?"

" 'Tis! 'Tis! 'Tis! 'Tis!" from all parts of the cabin.

"Now wait for the next blow."

T———o———o———o———o———o———o ——
By this time, though the ship were in a
o———o———o———o———o———o———o——
fog, the audience were in a gale (of laughter and
——o————o————o———o————————
fun). "Here we go."
—o——————t

"I'll tell you a tale without any flam," etc., etc., and when the last "ri tu di nu, ri tu di nu"—I slipped in under the wire—a winner.
————o————o————o————t

In the division of the spoils I collected enough for an all-day struggle at poker wherein I invested many times, in mistaken confidence that "aces up" would beat "three of a kind," "a straight," "a flush," "a full," or "four of a kind." "Now good night and play your trumpet till morning."

After subsequent experience in transatlantic travel, I have come to the conclusion that the American sailors must be a comparatively hardy lot, as the innumerable ship concerts given all the year round are invariably for the benefits of invalid British seamen, or their widows and orphans.

My bump of respect for our mutual friend, Christopher Columbus, is considerably enlarged, for if with the wonderful improvements of modern science, the ocean still has terrors for us, what must he have dared, who, with a single plank between him and the remorseless sea, still persevered in his search for the unknown land.

We are now nearing the harbor of Queenstown, Ireland, and having been informed that if we missed stopping off and seeing Ireland on our first arrival, we would probably end our days in cross ignorance of the beauties of the Emerald Isle, we decided to land at Queenstown and get acquainted with the beauties of Erin.

As we steamed up the harbor—the finest I have ever seen—the houses on the terraced hillside resembled those purchased at the toy shops, square cut and all of the same pattern, but we learned afterwards they were the residences of the middle class. Higher up they were more imposing.

Where were we to go first? That was the primary question confronting us. Had we better go in search of the golden harp, the cherished emblem of the island,

or stop and listen to "The Bells of Shandon"? As strangers, everything appealed to us, and nature as well as the followers of St. Patrick seemed to greet us with open arms. A vote on the question resulted in favor of Cork, and we bid adieu to the port of entry and started on our Irish wanderings.

Arriving at Cork, I could not help but recall the reception that the city once accorded a certain Englishman who afterwards became the founder of a great state in America. I refer to William Penn. It was here indeed that he was converted to Quakerism and cast aside his coat of mail for the garb of a peacemaker. But it appears that the Corkorians did not approve of his "change of costume," for, as we follow history, we find a record showing that he was seized and thrown into prison, with eighteen others of his faith. When liberated, the wearers of the green not only requested him to depart in peace, but actually forced him to leave the island.

But Cork was kind to us. Our hotel, the Imperial (everything is royal here), tendered us a "nightly" reception, the likes of which I have never been the recipient of since. The hostelry being full, the landlord improvised a bed for us in the parlor, two lounges being placed together with three chairs at the end to lengthen it. It was about as uncomfortable as the berth on the ship, with this difference: that in the berth we *couldn't* lie still, and here we *had to*.

The next day, a lovely ride in an Irish jaunting car,

through the greenest country imaginable, with river-windings, fields checkered off by hedges, stone walls and ancient trees, covered with a dense growth of ivy, brought us to Blarney Castle.

I suppose the first question the reader is prepared to ask me now, is, "Did you kiss the blarney stone?" I confess that I did. And furthermore, I assure him that kissing that amulet, which is said to confer on those who smack it an irresistible charm of persuasive eloquence, is an operation attended with some danger, for the stone is the lowest rock of a projecting turret at the very top of the castle, a height of one hundred and fifty feet. Grasping the irons fastened into the famous rock, and with two fellow-beings holding my legs, I looked down from the dizzy height and accomplished my object. Firm hands, faithful attendants and a strong desire to possess the charm were the only things that prevented me from taking a fall as disastrous as that of Humpty Dumpty. From the crowned elevation I also saw the veritable "Groves of Blarney," about which I have sung so many, many times, and had the satisfaction of looking down on some things which have long since become ancient in song and story.

Nature has been very bountiful in her gifts to Ireland, and especially is this true of that section in which lies the fairest of all fair scenes — the lakes of Killarney. In going down to see this unrivalled chain of lakes, we drove through the "Gap of Dunloe," a wild moun-

tain pass, followed at every step of the way by certain descendants of "Kate Kearney" who refused to be shaken off without a "remembrance." Torc Cascade, Muckross Abbey and Ross Castle along the way are so noted that it is a reflection on any reader's intelligence to repeat the legends with which their history is saturated.

There was a place on Innisfallen Island that was of particular interest, inasmuch as we had an opportunity to contemplate age and infirmity. The old monastery that greets you is a charming old ruins, completely buried in ivy, built—only the stars know when. Some idea of its age may be gained when I write that there is a tree in the courtyard known to be over six hundred years old, and from the top of the wall of the monastery protrudes the decayed trunk of a large tree, which must have taken *root* since the building *was a ruin.* Think of that and then listen, if you will, to the talk of saving that Boston American infant in swaddling clothes—"The Old South." It makes me laugh! Why, old ruins in Ireland are as common as club houses and hotels in America. But let us proceed.

After a regretful farewell to Killarney and its beauties, we journeyed to Dublin. Seized with a disturbance in my digestive apparatus, I laid over and appropriately celebrated by *dublin up.* I might have stayed several days, but as a physician's fee for a visit is a guinea ($5.16\frac{2}{3}$) I concluded to straighten out and get well.

Several things in Ireland surprised me. First, the beauty of the country—the astonishing growth of ivy, leaves larger than any mapleleaf I ever saw, completely covering high stone walls for miles, and twining around the trunks of every tree. Secondly, the absence of the low Irish character we see so much of in America, and, last but not least, the tameness of the crows.

Crows! Crows!! Crows!!! They are all "rooks" here—reminding me that Brother Joshua once remarked that the crow is a fine bird to hunt, but a hard one to kill. Such could hardly be the case in Ireland, they were as numerous and as tame as the doves that hover near St. Mark's, Venice.

I asked our jaunting car driver the *caws* for this, and he said it must be the birds instinctively detected a disposition on my part to *carry on!*

After a ride on some more sad salt sea surges—this time of the Irish brand—we arrived at Holyhead and directed our footsteps toward the venerable walled town of Chester. As it was some time ago since I visited it, I am a little mixed on the history of the place. I can't just remember whether Confucius took it from Abraham or whether Xerxes captured it from "Aleck" or whether the Greeks wrested it from the Athenians. At all events, it has a long record of sieges and battles, and being surrounded by a wall built a year or two before the opening chapter of Genesis, it is well worth a visit.

Thanks to Baedeker's Guide and a hired carriage,

we were able to show our ecclesiastical friend the sights of Chester as he had never seen them before—but when, after witnessing a drill of the garrison, I told him we had in Boston a school regiment that could give them pointers, he was ready, and even urgent, to inform us when the next train left for Liverpool. And so we departed.

As we entered our Liverpullian hostelry, the first person I met was an old acquaintance, a fellow American, about ready to return to his home in Chicago. He looked downcast.

"How do you like old Yurrip?" I asked.

"Thoroughly disgusted with it," he answered, shaking his head. "This is not my first trip, but, by thunder, it's my *last!* Why?"

And then my American friend gave vent to his feelings. "Rhine! dirty water! Cologne Cathedral has been twelve hundred years in the making and it isn't done yet. You know as well as I do that if Chicagoans had the job they would have had her roofed in and opened with prayer, inside of six months. Believe me, there's no enterprise over here."

"Didn't you see anything that you would like to take back home with you," I ventured to ask.

"Yes, one thing only. I've been dining at them infernal table d'hotes for three months and got nothing but chicken drumsticks every time. I've made up my mind that every tough old hen on the Continent

and the Isles is a centipede, and I'd like to take one back to stick up in Cook County as a curiosity."

Despite this unfavorable account, we decided to push onward.

Before quitting Liverpool we attended the opera where we saw and heard our little friend Julia Gaylord, the former prima donna of "The Two Cadis," in "The Golden Cross." I assure you, we were glad to find her fulfilling the promise of that early debut, and doing her part towards keeping up the American artistic prestige on alien shores.

After a trip up the east coast of Ireland and Scotland, touching on everything royal, surveying the checkered fields on which kings and queens fought and fell, and after wending our way through the silent cloisters and hallowed abbeys, we proceeded toward the great goal of our pilgrimage—a place where creeds, colors and caste boil and bubble, and help to fill the melting pot of the universe—the city of London.

Barnabee as the Duke of Santa Cruz in "The Serenade"

Barnabee and Louise Cleary in "Pygmalion and Galatea"

Barnabee as Professor in "The Ogallalas"

Barnabee: Sheriff as Tinker in "Robin Hood," second act

Barnabee and Mrs. Bartlett in "Pygmalion and Galatea"

Barnabee as the Professor in "The Ogallalas"

Barnabee: Sheriff as a Tinker in "Robin Hood," second act

Barnabee as Rip Van Winkle, first act

Barnabee as Rip Van Winkle, last act

WHALEBACK LIGHT, NEAR
PORTSMOUTH, N. H

Chapter XXV

DOING DEAR OLD "LUNNON"

THE HAUNTS OF DICKENS.—IN LONDON TOWER.—HAMPTON COURT.—ON THE THAMES.—WESTMINSTER ABBEY.—CONCERTS AND DRAMAS.—SIMS REEVES, THE UNFORGOTTEN.

"Instructed by the antiquary times,
He must, he is, he cannot but be wise."
—William Shakespeare.

WE were a little surprised, perhaps disappointed, not to disembark in an impenetrable fog when we reached London. The weather was so clear and fine that we could plainly see that the railway approaches and terminal stations were vastly more imposing, not to say more commodious, than any we remembered in New York, Boston or Chicago.

I spent my first few days in the metropolis on the tops of omnibuses, ferreting out names and localities immortalized by my dear favorite Dickens. I dropped upon the original St. George Inn, across the Thames in Southwark, where old Sam Weller and Samivel used to hang out.

The landlady of this historic inn was a typical, buxom, rosy-cheeked person, wearing an immense cameo brooch, with earrings and graduated pendants to

match. She was able to show me the identical easy-chair in which old man Weller sat and delivered his homilies on "vidders," and the place where young Sam blacked boots and reeled off Wellerisms.

The stairs leading to the outside galleries and the bedrooms were worn almost as thin as shavings, with footsteps of many centuries; and the sensation was strangely hypnotic as they buckled beneath our pilgrim tread. We stayed for luncheon, and the joint was served as in the jolly days of yore—being carved by the person who chanced to occupy the seat at the end of the table.

Later that same day, in the Kensington Museum, we examined the original manuscripts of "Pickwick," "Dombey & Son," "David Copperfield," and other works of Dickens, with their neat handwriting in blue ink, their interlineations, alterations, and marginal doctoring, just as they had left the master's hand for the printer, now nearly three-quarters of a century ago. Oh, that was a day of rare joy, a veritable reunion with beloved spirits, unseen, but forgotten—never!

A friend of mine defending Dickens against the reproach of a temperance advocate, to the effect that he made the characters in his novels drink too much, exclaimed:

"Why, bless you! Dickens didn't make 'em drink—he couldn't prevent their drinking. They just drank like fish, of their own accord!"

I must say, that is pretty nearly true to life, if my

observation of London and Londoners amounts to anything.

Our party—reinforced by a Boston newspaper man as bright and witty as they boast of over there—was ushered through the labyrinths of the London Wine Vaults. The walls were said to be twenty feet thick; and our guide's head could not have been much less.

Huge white, gray and black cones of mould hung from the ceilings—stalactites of this bibulous Cave of the Wines.

I stirred up the echoes and a solitary rodent by singing "Simon the Cellarer," with the loud pedal on. Then we sampled the wine—a mellow Madeira such as was known as "Canary" in Shakespeare's time—in Lilliputian glasses. We were expected to just sip the nectar and smack our lips, instead of "turning it in loose" as we did. On being feelingly reminded that the beverage was over a hundred years old, my friend held up his thimble-like glass and remarked: "Mighty small for its age!"

At the National Gallery, I picked out a "Murillo" and Sir Edwin Landseer's "Spaniels" for my gallery, but did not care to take them out of the building on account of their weight in English pounds. They are probably still on the nation's hands.

We dropped in at the British Museum, saw that everything was there, and noted that the course of art instruction was of the co-educational order, as all

the bachelor maids were drawing or working on Apollo Belvideres and other presentments of the male form divine.

We gazed without comment upon that most expensive piece of bride-cake architecture, the Albert Memorial; climbed 540 steps and the dome of St. Paul's to view the landscape o'er, and observe the operation of winding the great clock, which takes forty-five minutes (why, I have seen hustling American executors wind up an estate in less time than that); visited the Tower, where the royal beef-eaters dressed in the antique costumes of Henry the Eighth, saw where Anne Boleyn, Lady Jane Grey, Mary "Queen of Scots" and a host of other celebrities were executed, the chamber where Queen Elizabeth was imprisoned; the cell wherein Sir Walter Raleigh had years of captivity to think matters over; the narrow vault where the regalia or crown jewels lie in state, and the very spot where the young princes were murdered. All this, and more to be found in the ancient citadel, helps to preserve for the modern Anglo-Saxon the record of the bloody deeds and daring of his ancestors. However, anyone, whether red, yellow, black or white, will find the Tower a splendid banquet hall in which to feast on crimson blocks, rusty blades and national arms.

I did not intend to write a guide book when I commenced these travel chapters. Pardon me, gentle reader, but I should like to carry you along with me to a few more points of interest.

Hampton Court, an old residence of English sovereigns, situated at the entrance of a splendid park of eleven thousand acres, laid out with flower beds galore and goodly walks, bids us welcome.

Imagine if you can five rows of horse chestnut trees, all of them stately and grand, on either side of a mall, a mile and a half or two in length. When they are in bloom, there is no such sight in all England. I can only imagine what Hampton Court House must have been with its pictures and other evidences of wealth in those far-off days when the trees were all in bloom, and sovereigns and half sovereigns gathered on the rolling green.

In the magnificent garden we saw a wonderful grape vine, rivalling some of those to be found on our own Pacific slope. It was planted by King George I, one hundred and twenty years ago, and is as large as an ordinary tree, yielding in the neighborhood of some twelve hundred pounds of grapes. I can, in my dreams, see myself trying to quench my plebeian thirst with the juice from such a vine.

We did not have to imagine or guess about the Thames—that temperance stream that has quenched the erring appetites of kings, queens, traitors and scoundrels since the beginnings of time. Amid a moving panorama of every conceivable kind of conveyance on keels, laden with the floating population of London, and all having the merriest kind of an outing, passing the loveliest stretch of residences, we paddled

our way to Twickenham Ferry, and then disembarked to seek the Star and Garter.

The principal features of this renowned hostelry on that memorable day were a very so-so dinner, a beautiful view of the river and its surroundings, and a Britishism from one of the waiters.

Just before leaving New York I was induced, by a friend, to imbibe a Martini cocktail, which everyone who has any knowledge of ambrosial alcoholic beverages knows is compounded of gin, vermuth and other delectable ingredients, and is "mellering to the organ," so much so, that I then and there inwardly resolved that if I was ever asked again my particular "vanity" in drinks, I would articulate Martini. That's what I did at the Star and Garter.

After an absence of thirty minutes, the usual interval allowed for a London waiter to get anything, the proud imperious servitor reported:

"Hawfully sorry, sir, but we cannot serve that Martine."

"What," said I, "the finest hotel in the world not able to furnish a Martini cocktail? Why?"

"The fact is we—we—we are entirely hout of Martine."

"Well, then," I added, by way of mending matters, "you may give me a Manhattan—that is, if you've got any Manhat."

But he hadn't. I double-tipped him, though, for his addition to my stock of jokelets.

Another waiter to whom I did not begrudge any amount of tip while abroad was an Elizabethan fellow at the inn at Stratford-on-Avon, who was so imbued with the Shakespearean spirit of the place that he talked blank verse even when serving a chop or drawing a mug of ale.

"'Ave you hordered, gentle sirs?"

"Thank you, we have."

"'Tis well!"—with sepulchral voice and tragic air.

I have touched on the custom of tipping in the preceding chapters, but it hit me so hard that before I returned home I had learned to look upon it as an organized "hold-up" business. But I was not the only one held up.

A well-known American poet-critic, standing at the stern of a steamer departing from Southampton, turned toward the crowded pier and shouted through an improvised megaphone:

"If there is any man on this whole island to whom I have not given a sixpence, let him now come forward!"

The silent palm is extended everywhere—'mid pleasures and palaces and hovels, by the wayside beggar and the gold-laced lackey in the royal establishment at Windsor. Even the statues in Westminster Abbey, in many instances, stretch out a sculptured hand in what looks like a suggested "touch!"

The late Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll did not, so far as I am aware, comment upon this peculiarity of the tombs and statues of the mighty dead ones of

Westminster; but when the enormous solidity of the sarcophagi enclosing the royal remains was pointed out to him, he said to the verger:

"If any of them escape, notify me by cable."

We visited this aristocratic God's acre—Westminster Abbey—and saw with our own eyes the marble memorials holding down the remains of the great and good of England. I noticed also that the inscriptions seemed to typify the usual London weather, for everybody had died and was buried during a reign.

It would be taxing your time and patience if I should attempt to read the names from the scroll of the honored dead. But the most interesting part of the Abbey, I might relate, is the Poets' Corner, where are to be found memorials of the British poets, Chaucer, Dryden, Milton, Shakespeare, Gray, Addison, Thomson, Tennyson and our own dear American poet, Longfellow.

If there are any in the "400" or "Who's Who" class, at home or abroad, who would like to examine the bones of their ancestors or who desire to discover the source from whence flowed their "blue blood," I would advise them to spend a fortnight in this great repository and get acquainted with all that is mortal of the Edwards, the Richards, the Henrys and the Georges. Yes, they were the pampered kings who pointed with pride to their family crests and urns of "unearned increment"—the mighty ones who wore the ermine of state and the *nom de plumes* of Roman numerals.

But like the royalty found on the chess board, they didn't stand long. Each in his own allotted time toppled and fell, and were stored away in this great abbey where "valiant dust that builds on dust," like the

"pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre."

Perhaps, my friend, the two coronation-chairs which are in Westminster and in which the rulers of Britain have been anointed and crowned for ages, might prove of interest to those who delight in collecting old furniture and bric-a-brac. Inanimate as the old chairs are, yet they are full of history—if nothing more. Personally, I should like to see them purchased and brought over and placed in some American drawing room or Museum. Mr. Financier, how much will you bid for them?

Having dutifully accomplished what we set out to see in the line of "sights," we felt entitled to some rest and recreation. So we went to the Covent Garden Opera four times, hearing "The Barber of Seville," "Paul and Virginia," "Rigoletto" and "Faust," with casts including Patti, Albani, Gerster, Trebelli, Bettini, Scalchi, Nicolini, Capoul, Fancelli, Maurel, Rota and a host of other celebrities.

We heard one oratorio and seven concerts. We listened to Antoinette Sterling's sterling and indestructible voice, and applauded the historic tenor Mario, at a testimonial given in his last decline. On this occasion the incomparable Christine Nilsson sang.

and figuratively speaking, she put all the other artists in the background, or in her pocket.

We weathered the storms of a "Stabat Mater" raised by a church choir. Honestly, it was the most diabolical outrage ever perpetrated upon an unoffending audience. They afterwards attempted other offerings but with no better effect.

By way of contrast, we heard Sir Arthur Sullivan's "Pinafore." It was new and spick-and-span, then, and I took copious notes of the performance, little thinking how serviceable they would be to me later on.

At the theater we saw "Our Boys," and "Diplomacy," but they were hardly up to the American standard.

Our one real theatrical sensation was Henry Irving as Vanderdecken, in "The Flying Dutchman," at the Lyceum. It was an impressive production scenically as well as in the sense of histrionic art, particularly in the scene where old Van is thrown from a rock into the sea, and then washed up by the surf onto the beach again—for he can't lose himself.

It was our first sample of Irving—a memorable emotion. His strange personality and speech struck us hard, at the outset; but we had the satisfaction of soon forgetting them, and all other external matters, in a spellbound appreciation of the great, compelling actor, which never waned in after years.

Here is where, without dropping into a maudlin, "blood-thicker-than-water" strain, I wish to note a distinguishing and admirable trait of our British

cousins, and that is their staunch, fervid loyalty to their own. In our dear land of free speech and free-and-easy manners a public person has to be good, do good, and make good, first, last, and all the time, or else be pilloried, scorned or "turned down." But in England, once established in the public favor, not all the king's horses nor all the king's men could wrench loose the hold of public loyalty.

This was never better illustrated than in the case of the world-renowned English tenor, Sims Reeves. We were eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses to his prodigious and unshakable, if also well-deserved, popularity. No less than seven times did we buy tickets, at a guinea per, to hear Reeves sing, and fell down each time, because he was out of voice. But the eighth time, at the Alexander Palace, he was all there, and he was a joy forever! Such a welcome as he got was fit for a conquering hero. When he had finished the aria from "Don Giovanni," there was a roar; but when his grand and soul-stirring ballad, "The Bay of Biscay, O!" rang out, as from a silver trumpet, the cyclone of uproarious enthusiasm broke loose. The multitude rose *en masse*, cheered themselves hoarse, and hurled their loose wearing apparel into the air. I was one of the ringleaders of that mob.

They said that Sims Reeves was a wreck, that he was patched, powdered, hair-dyed, and doped up generally for that supreme moment of performance, which left him limp as a rag half an hour after. I

don't know. If he was a wreck then, how I wish I might have heard him when, full-rigged and with all canvas set, he sailed gloriously into the hearts of his fellow-countrymen! Such a voice, such style, expression, phrasing, intonation, and sustaining power I had never heard before, and the memory still remains with me, unique and unapproachable.*

A jaunt to Epsom Downs, on "Darby Day," convinced me that, dearly as the Britisher loves his horse, the four-legged creatures on such occasion are not in it with the human race. Such a tremendous, surging concourse of people, all on pleasure bent, could scarcely be matched in all the world—unless possibly, on the board walk at Atlantic City, New Jersey.

One day in Boston when the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) was passing in a procession, I had the honor of lifting my hat to His Highness, and he returned the courtesy. I did the same thing in Hyde Park, London, in 1878, but he seemed to have forgotten me.

However, I touched elbows with the Grand Old Man, Gladstone, on Regent Street—a sturdy, stalwart figure, with deep, dark, glowing eyes that reminded me of Daniel Webster's.

* As an artist Sims Reeves stood out persistently for those privileges which the possession of an unrivalled voice might be considered to confer on him. In the opening of his career at Milan he once refused to sing, owing to a throat trouble, and though a squad of gendarmes carried him off from his house to La Scala he remained obdurate. So frequent in his latter years did the disappointments to the public become that Sims Reeves was himself a sufferer. He never acquired the great fortune which lay within his grasp, and his old age was spent in comparative poverty.—Editor.

A delightful "at home" with the Howard Pauls, a musical evening with John L. Hatton, the composer, pianist, and singer, and an English high tea with Miss Braddon, were among the social dissipations of our London sojourn.

Altogether, despite our plebeian origin, we had a royal good time in London, and were not unduly elated when the day came that saw us off for "gay Paree and the Continong." If we failed to get our share of the good things over there, or if we left anything valuable behind us, the population is welcome to it.

Chapter XXVI

A SHORT TRIP THRU "YURRIP"

"He sees the passage of this globe of earth,
And makes right use of what his sight partakes."
—Barnabee's Itinerarium.

AFTER a ride across the English Channel, we arrived at Calais, a famous old stronghold which played a part in English history years before Columbus was the leading man on the American stage. Over one of its own gates are the words:

"Then shall Frenchmen Calais win
When iron and lead like cork shall swim."

But this was a false prophecy, for although England considered it to be "the brightest jewel in her crown," the time came (1558) when the Frenchmen, tired of English rule, took the gem away from Queen Mary, and this happened centuries before ironclads and submarines plowed the historic waters.

We had our first encounter with a foreign language soon after leaving this French port. I had purchased tickets for Cologne, they had been put in an envelope and slipped into my pocket. Just before the time of presenting them to the head official, I took a look at them, and found, to my horror, that we were on our way to Koln. There was no strap to pull and we

couldn't alight from the car. I was in despair until a good-natured German, in the same carriage, explained matters, but I confess that I felt for a few moments as the chap in a railway car did, who was cursing his bad luck, when a horrified person, sitting in the next seat back, tapped him on the shoulder and said, "Did you know you are on the road to perdition?" "Just my cussed luck," replied the young man, "I bought a ticket for Portland."

Well, we journeyed on and reached the frontier, where our grips were examined. When the officers understood thoroughly that we could not understand a word they said, they talked all the faster. My friend from Boston put a stopper in the next encounter with the following formula preceded by several darker words:

"————Have you ever had the measles and if so how many?"

The checks were pawed out immediately. This shibboleth was repeated many times and whether it was the matter or manner of its delivery, with the index finger shaking close to the proboscis of the offender, that produced the desired effect we never had any knowledge, but it always, except in one case, secured the passes and a side-splitting laugh from the by-standers.

Our next discovery, looking from the window of the car, was that women's rights were not the subject of mad discussion in that neighborhood, for we saw

members of the weaker sex, and boys, in the heyday of youth, mowing grass, pitching and loading hay, while the male head of the family was asleep or enjoying his pipe of peace.

Cologne being the next watering place, we concluded to remain over night, and fill our travelling canteen with the sweet perfume, which was on tap, or by the bottle or keg, as per the display signs, at every other door. We spared a hasty glance at the famous cathedral, one of the finest specimens of architecture in Europe—and were informed that it dates back to Charlemagne's time, and that its entire cost represents an outlay of ten million dollars. Skyscrapers always cost.

We started up the Rhine, and for forty-eight hours we took our fill of the panorama of mountains, hills, villages, castles and terraces. We put in the first day at Bonn with Beethoven and his immortal symphonies. I used to sing to my dear mother a song, the last of each verse ending with "Bingen on the Rhine." It was her prime favorite. Goodness knows, I never expected to see the place, but, when the morning broke, there it was shining like a dream. Above the picturesque town rose the Mouse-tower where Bishop Hatto cornered the grain market and fell a victim to the rodent invaders. After a short trip in the neighborhood of this fairyland, we proceeded to the land of Heidelburg. There were no students in sight, as it was vacation time, but we stopped to inspect an ancient

ruin. The only thing connected with the venerable pile was the capacious tun which was thirty feet long, twenty-five feet in diameter, held fifty thousand gallons, had been filled three times and the chap who tended it three thousand times. It must have taken that fellow several summers to make those swallows.

The age of these reminders of the past brought to mind forcibly the story of the clergyman from some upper county in New Hampshire who came riding up to the grocery store, mounted on a dilapidated nag in the last stages of decay, presented to the reverend gentleman the day before at a church celebration. An irreverent rube standing near inquired, "Parson, whar did ye git that d— thing?" The reverend meekly replied, "Well! it's quite as good an animal as our Savior rode into Jerusalem upon." Whereupon the reviler stepped up to the head of the collection of bones, opened the toothless jaws and snapping them together with a hollow sound ejaculated—"Same hoss!"

The trip from this point back to Paris has been "done up" so many times that my readers will escape weariness if I just hustle things along "in a line" of flight rather than stopping at every stand to deliver a lengthy "travelogue."

We enjoyed the loveliness of Baden Baden, waved our banner at Munich, visited Verona—found the "two gentlemen" out, but stood in the place where Octavius Tiberius or some other stony-hearted old Roman

shouted "Bring on a fresh martyr," plunged through the Tyrol and feasted our eyes on the most enchanting scenery. On the Piazza of St. Mark's we ate cranita, saw the representation of that same old Do(d)ge in the picture galleries, and talked American-Italian to the swarming beggars. We glided on the Grand Canal, passing under the bridge of the Rialto where "Shylock" was "rated for his money and its usuries," and saw the house from which lovely Jessica eloped. Floating onward we gazed upon the palace where Othello wooed and won the gentle Desdemona, and saw the decaying tenement where Lucretia Borgia, she who played a great and terrible yet fascinating part in history, trapped many an unwary gallant. We crossed the "Bridge of Sighs" where the prisoners condemned by the once powerful "Council of ten," took their last look of the blue Italian sky, and visited the dungeon which resounded to their last prayers and groans.

And now our footsteps are turned towards the setting sun. First comes Lake Como, then Florence the Beautiful with her galleries filled almost to bursting with masterpieces of art, and then on to Milan where heavenward rises the wondrous cathedral which simply overshadows all the others we have as yet seen. Certainly I never shall get over those immense pillars. I have forgotten their diameter and circumference, but there were enough of them to go around and still have enough left for several other cathedrals. With our cry of "Excelsior" we climbed Switzerland's lofty

mountains, crossed her motionless "billows of ice" and sailed on her lovely lakes. Finally, we sat down—that is, just for a rest—in the most beautiful of beautiful places, naughty, wicked, imperial Paris. The exposition was in full swing, and, as we had attended the Centennial two years previous at Philadelphia, we had an opportunity to size up the foreign make with the American brand. We found new sensations. We went *up* in the Balloon Captif, thirty of us, all scared half to death but all exclaiming "How beautiful!" We went *down* into the sewers, paddled around in a large flat-bottomed boat, through its interminable labyrinth of canals, bringing away nothing but smells which lasted us during the remainder of our stay in the city. We went *into* the catacombs, where three million bones are piled up in small squares, each pile surmounted with a grinning skull and crossbones, and the only thought that agitated me was, how *will* all of the occupants find the right bones when the last trump sounds. To conclude, the statue of "Liberty Enlightening the World" was on exhibition, and by special invitation we took the *inside* route to the head of Liberty and took a rest on the sofas located in the cheeks. Some cheek, you will observe, but not any too much considering what Liberty was required to do later—stand in New York harbor and give an imitation of enlightening a world with a torch of as much as four candle power, supplied by the powerful city of New York. It is said that when the Tammany chief shall

have evened up with Croker in the spoils of office, an addition of two more dinky candles may be confidently expected. In the meantime, the goddess is having the time of her life in the enlightening business. Here, my friend, is where we start for God's country, and our verdict is that of all the cities, London is the most interesting; Paris, by far, the most beautiful; and Venice, the bride of the Adriatic, the most fascinating.

It was a great trip and I enjoyed myself from start to finish, but I am perfectly satisfied to dwell in the land where no monarchs preside; and the one precious spot whose radiance surpasses all others and which sways a magnetic influence over me, is where the motto "God Bless Our Home" hangs upon the wall.

Home—home, sweet home!

Chapter XXVII

BIRTH OF THE BOSTON IDEALS

"When the history of the Boston Ideals is fully read there will be written up to their credit two great services which they have rendered to musical progress in this country. They raised the standard of light opera performance in every way. They have also had an excellent moral effect. Their performances have been far more refined than those of most companies, and more free from music-hall reminiscences of suggestion and business. Barnabee was a reformer upon his own account. He showed that a comedian could be excruciatingly funny without being ungentlemanly. Another good work of the company was the intelligent delivery of dialogue, particularly the Gilbert dialogue. In this respect they have surpassed all their competitors."—Chicago Critic.

RETURNING from my European peek-a-boo—which was not a waste of time—from the kaleidoscopic sights of foreign capitals; the languages and sounds of a rapid-transit Babel; the rubbings-up against kings and queens aces and deuces; after the tussle which my letter of credit had had with the banking institutions abroad, a grave problem presented itself.

Financially speaking, I was in a predicament similar to that of the minister's boy, who, on a Saturday afternoon, sat on a snake fence watching a woodchuck-hole, when the visiting clergyman who was to exchange pulpits with his father next day passed along the road, on his way to the house. Observing the lad with bulging eyes intent upon his expected prey, the reverend gentleman said:

"Well, my boy, do you think you'll get him?"

"Get him?" was the reply—"get him? I've *got* to get him. The minister's comin' and we're out of meat."

The weekly lyceums found it difficult to corral full houses at two dollars for twelve entertainments; the concert system was getting a little shaky in the knees and backbone, and needed a rest-cure; or something novel to be sandwiched in between times for the culture-bred, to give variety and aid the musical digestion of the highbrowed regular patrons, as well as of the rank and file.

Strange as it may seem to my readers, I occasionally developed a bright idea. Now, my friend Arthur Sullivan—whose "Sir" prefix was not tacked on until a period subsequent to that of which I am now writing—had made a screaming success of his musical setting of that perennial Madison Morton farce, "Box and Cox." Why shouldn't one good "turn" usher in another and the aforesaid success be repeated with something else?

I undertook to answer this question by personally conducting a step-ladder investigation along the top shelves of a musical mausoleum, where superannuated favorites were laid out in the dust of oblivion. Presently I dragged from this repository the theatrical remains of "Betsy Baker; or, The Laughable Adventures of a Laundress," a rollicking farce in which "Betsey" and her friends, the Marmaduke Mousers,

disport themselves in unconscious accord with the classical dramatic unities.

Remembering as I did William Warren in the piece, I concluded that I had a corner on the future.

Rechristening the piece "Marmaduke Mouser," I proceeded to take the center of the stage. Members of my concert company were cast for the principals of the new piece, and then we set to work to raise a chorus. One idea was to have the chorus *painted* on the back drop, as had been done before, and has been done since. But as this chorus of ours was to be heard rather than seen, I finally decided to substitute "shouts outside," these to be furnished by stage hands and the back-door hangers-on, who were always with us, and would do anything to get in to see the show.

Everything was now ready for our grand musico-farcical venture, except the lyrics and music, these being regarded as essential to a production for which a number of expensive singers had been engaged. I therefore sought out a newspaper dramatic critic and said to him:

"Ben, you have such a keen eye for gaps, deficiencies, and shortcomings that you are just the man to furnish the proper thing in lyrics and such like for this show, to make it staunch and bomb-proof. Will you do it?"

He was so surprised that he agreed to the proposition. The musical director of "The Two Cadis" undertook to collaborate with him and vamp out a score. They were to frame up a practicable lyric and provide the

necessary atmosphere with which to run it. The inevitable happened, in due course.

There is a repartee oft heard on the Rialto, to this effect:

"Are Gagger and Shine friends?"

"No, they are collaborators."

Our collaborators started in with the never-ending dispute: Which is the main guy, the composer or the librettist? They are still at loggerheads, and the great question remains unsettled to this day. The immediate result of the feud was that our atmosphere became a trifle murky. However, we thought we might be able to sing through it.

I circularized all managers within reach, advising them to call early if they wished to book us. Strange to relate, they did!

We toured the New England towns, principally, alternating "Mouser" with concerts, and contriving to lay by an amount of money sufficient to withstand the onslaughts of railroads, hotels, op'ry-house proprietors, restaurants, rathskellers, and the pay-roll, and still leave a vestige discernible to the naked eye.

One cherished recollection of that winter was my first meeting with the Hon. James G. Blaine, the "Plumed Knight" of my political idolatry. At Augusta, Maine, where he lived, he came on the stage one night after the performance, to give us a good word of appreciation and cheer.

With his dark, brilliant eyes, his strong, animated

face lit up with a genial smile, his hair and beard already touched with silver, he looked outwardly what he was at heart—the soul of chivalry. His handshake was warm and vote-compelling. He spoke of his enjoyment as though he meant it—and perhaps I didn't get in a brief line of admiration for him. Oh, no!

Subsequently I had frequent occasion to know what a "good audience" Mr. Blaine was. On my part, though guileless of politics, I remained ever a loyal adherent of Maine's splendid statesman, who, alas! finally went down to undeserved, unwarrantable and untimely defeat.

Rising every morn with the early worm that's caught by the bird, and traveling all day amid the uncomfortable vicissitudes inseparable from one-night stands, was not conducive to any hilarious flow of animal spirits. Still, we contrived to extract a modicum of fun from even the most forbidding conditions.

One simple but effective bit of business for getting a laugh was worked almost daily by the tenor and myself in collusion. We each carried in our waistcoat-pockets an old-fashioned tuning-pipe, for the purpose of striking the proper key at picnics, funerals, and such like emergencies. These could be adjusted and blown so as to sound any note in the gamut. We would enter simultaneously at opposite ends of a car, with the pipes attuned a minor third apart. These we would nonchalantly place to our mouths, concealed under pocket handkerchiefs, and then, as if by chance, accord

each blow a stentorian blast. At the sound of this mysterious chord, the passengers would all start up in their seats, with varied expressions of bewilderment at the unwonted coincidence of two gentlemen with colds in the head, blowing in weird nasal harmony!

"Well, did you ever?" "Did you hear anything?" "What in— was that, anyway?"

On a certain occasion—speaking of striking the proper key—our quartette officiated as musical mourners, at the usual stipendiary of ten dollars per, at a rather stylish funeral. Some unfamiliar music was handed us, on broadsides of the old-time tune book pattern, with two different tunes to the side. Poor Prescott, the tenor, somehow read the clef signature of the upper piece, which was A minor, in mistake for the lower one, G major, which we were to sing. Having once started wrong, he persisted in keeping that key right through to the end, whilst we other three tried in vain to sing him down. The effect was worthy of a Richard Strauss. Good-bye to our fee, I thought. But the next day I was dumbfounded at receiving a check in full payment, together with a letter from the bereaved Croesus who had hired us, to the effect that, while he didn't pretend to know anything about music, still he could tell artistic vocalization when he heard it, and ours was the real offering! Would I accept the assurance of his high appreciation of our singing? Well, rather!

At a railway junction, out in the rural districts, an

elderly agricultural-looking individual, with whiskers like corn-silk, boarded the train. He carried a long, frail, swaying article, vaguely resembling a fish-pole decorated with faded ribbons. From the care he took of this queer object, it seemed as if his future happiness depended upon its being shielded from harm, and kept intact in its newspaper wrappings, all bound round with a woolen string.

What was it? Why, nothing more or less than the mummified skeleton of a defunct stalk of corn. The old farmer placed it carefully up in the racks, and then sat watching it intently, as if he thought it liable to get up on its *ear* and *stalk* out of the car at any moment.

"Sir, will you kindly tell me the why-ness of yonder extraordinary hand-baggage, and its destination?" quoth I, my curiosity finally getting the upper hand.

"Wall, I hain't no objection," he answered. "D'ye see, I left home in Skowhegan, Maine, whar I'm now goin', forty years ago. Ef I should go back and tell 'em daown thar that I'd raised corn fifteen foot high, they'd hev me in a 'sylum inside o' tew hours. So I'm jest takin' this daown as a specimen of the growth o' this blessed country."

Thus the time flitted pleasantly by and our concert troupe flitted with it.

The season of 1878-'79 proved much shorter than usual, owing to the sudden advent of spring's ethereal mildness. I was pondering over the proposition of a local spring awakening, when it was nipped in the bud

by a cold day, on which the Boston Theater got left, and by an untimely frost.

This proved to be one of those blessings in disguise, which we hear so much about, but never officially recognize until the requisite identification papers are forthcoming.

Once more the unexpected and accidental operated on my many-sided career; and by a peculiar combination the current of my professional life was diverted from its placid course, to catch that tide

> "—which, taken at its flood
> Leads on to fortune."

It proved to be high tide—in my affairs. I refer to the advent of the Boston Ideal Opera Company, an organization destined to carry to the extreme edges of this continent the banner of distinctive merit, to diffuse pleasure and joy and happiness in hundreds of homes—yes, thousands of homes, and to become known throughout its history as the representative light-opera company of America.

Chapter XXVIII

"H. M. S. PINAFORE"

THE BOSTON IDEALS SAIL OUT INTO THE SEA OF POPULAR FAVOR ON THE ROYAL SHIP.

"One enjoys its drollery, another its music, a third its novelty, etc. Hearing it, it is easy to understand why the musical experts and esthetic playwrights were amazed at its hold on the popular heart. They had explained the ignominious failure of dozens of other extravaganzas—of one because it had no variety of action or setting, of another because it lacked popular solos, of a third because it treated of subjects far removed from popular interest. Yet Pinafore had all these ruinous objections—and it lived and thrived."—Critic.

IT may seem a trifle egotistical to write of the Boston Ideal Opera Company, as I am going to do, from the first-person viewpoint; but really I have no other handy. The organization and its history have been written up—and down—many, many times; but the real story still awaits my modest recital.

This is just how it happened.

The manager of the Boston Theater had despatched his son abroad with plenary powers to secure and bring home some foreign attraction guaranteed good for a season-end run. The young man found no difficulty in purchasing a piece according to his specifications. It had a great fire scene in the last act; and

"Her Majesty's Ship Pinafore" was first presented May 28, 1878, at the Opera Comique, London, and made a record run of seven hundred nights. Mr. Barnabee attended one of these early performances.—Editor.

yet, in spite even of this "burnt offering," the thing turned out "a frost"!

Then the manager went upon the housetop with a telescope, and scanned the theatrical firmament for some lucky star, meteor, constellation or comet. But it was the musical director who, at this crisis, was struck by the shooting-star of an idea.

"See here," he said to the manager, "this 'Pinafore,' that everybody is crazy about, has been already done to death in many ways—but has it been really sung? Never! Well, then, why not get Phillips and Whitney and Barnabee and Tom Karl together, and see what the piece is like, musically?"

Strange to relate, the managerial perception clutched at this idea. The next day, the suggestion of "Pinafore," with these artists in the principal roles, was launched. The press took it up, and everybody agreed that such a cast would be *ideal*.

That was our christening.

The readers who accompanied me to London, in these notes, will remember that we attended a performance of "Pinafore," when it was newly launched, and in its home port. Well, the notes I took on that occasion came in very handy as a prompt-book for the first production of the Gilbert and Sullivan piece in America, which Mr. Field put on at the Boston Museum, with his regular company, including Marie Wainwright, Sadie Martinot, Joe Haworth, and George Wilson.

By the way, it was here in Boston, also, when "The Mikado" came along in due course, that Richard Mansfield created the part of "Koko"—and well he did it, too. Twenty years later, after Mansfield's genius and masterful egotism had forced him to the front, and as interpreter he rightly regarded himself as being on a par with Shakespeare, Moliere, Shaw, Ibsen, and Louis N. Parker, I met him socially in a company of some distinction, at St. Louis. As I had joined heartily in the chorus of praise swelling around Mr. Mansfield, he asked me, genially, in which of his roles I liked him best.

"I haven't seen them all," I replied, "but in my opinion you have never done anything more truly artistic than your 'Koko' in 'The Mikado.'"

Subsequently I have thought that the great actor did not appreciate this compliment in quite the cordial spirit that I unsuspectingly paid it. At any rate—

"He smiled a sort of ghastly smile, and gave someone else the floor,
And the subsequent proceedings interested him no more."

But "Pinafore," with its Ideal cast, is now my theme. The town rang with anticipatory talk, before anything had been done in the way of actual organization and putting-forward.

Now, it came to pass in those days that a lady manager, Miss E. H. Ober by name, occupying an office in the Music Hall, had a large "bureau," with

many sections, in which she kept a large and choice assortment of artists to be hired out for a consideration, herself absorbing an equitable percentage thereof. She was first aid to the injured, in the amusement and lyceum fields.

To Miss Ober our manager went; and through her agency, in a very short space which may be approximately measured as a "jiffy," the company or crew was signed, and the good ship "Pinafore" got under way at the Boston Theater.

Our line-up was as follows:

Adelaide Phillips, the superb contralto; Myron W. Whitney, the basso of his time; Tom Karl, the dulcet-voiced tenor; Barnabee, the prosperous litterateur from whose pen these memoirs flow, and who can also sing some; Frothingham, a recent graduate from minstrelsy; Hitchcock, a rising young baritone; and Georgia Cayvan, who was really and truly a "sweet little *Hebe*." Mrs. Knowles and Lizzie Burton were two more "Ideals," whom we were a little later in realizing.

Miss Cayvan was already a favorite reader and elocutionist. The footlights beckoned her brightly. When I led her on the stage, our opening night, it ushered her into a profession which she adorned throughout an all too brief career, her best-remembered triumphs having been won as leading lady of Daniel Frohman's original and unrivaled Lyceum Stock Company of New York City.

On the eve of our premiere, Miss Phillips was suddenly taken ill, and had to resign her part. The role was then assigned to Isabelle McCulloch, afterward the wife of Brignoli, the famous Italian tenor.

Marie Stone was first choice for "Josephine"; but she was doing matinee warble stunts with Emma Abbott, and could not be unanchored. The Tuesday before our opening date came round, and we were still shy a "Captain's Daughter," though the signal of distress had been flying for a week or more.

On that Tuesday morning, at rehearsal, just as the conductor, from force of habit, rapped on his desk for the "Josephine" who never came, a young lady in street attire floated breezily alongside from the O. P. entrance, threw aside her veil, disclosing a very winsome face, and took up the air from the orchestra's cue, as if nothing had happened.

The apparition was startling, and some of us murmured:

"What phenomenal nerve!"

But a minute later we knew that the apparition had a charming voice; and in two minutes we were convinced that she knew how to sing. Also, she was up in the part. A spontaneous outburst of applause filled in her first pause, and she was engaged on the spot.

Her name was Mary Beebe. It transpired that she had previously tried to ship with us, backed by a recommendation from Annie Louise Cary; but for

some unfathomable reason had never obtained a hearing. This was her method of climbing in at the cabin port-hole; and as an illustration of Yankee feminine "git-up-and-git," the incident deserves chronicling.

That completed the roster of the original "Ideals"; and, with an outward equanimity which perhaps none of us felt within, we awaited the night of the premiere, also the "morning after," with the newspapers containing our notices, criticisms, and possibly artistic death-warrants!

When the night of April 14, 1879, duly arrived on schedule time, we were all fit and ready. (Accent on the "fit.") I have heard soldiers describe their sensations on first going into battle; but if there is any form of terror equal to that experienced by a person professionally and financially interested in the first performance of a new piece, when everything, including one's anatomy, is trembling in the balance, I shouldn't care to sample it. If I had not arranged with the musical director that he should keep one eye on the baton and the other on his seasick and wobbly friend, the *Admiral*, "the seclusion that the cabin grants" might have been mine prematurely.

The theater was packed to the dome with Boston's best and bravest, including the Apollo Club in a body — an assistance calculated to cheer their comrades on the stage. Enthusiasm was on tap before the overture. When the curtain went up and showed a full-

rigged man-of-war, with a complete crew engaged in the duties incidental to preparing for receiving an "official" visit, the generous applause splashed all over Her Majesty's ship and its cargo of living freight. The principals certainly got a "reception"; every song, duo, trio, and ensemble was encored; from the "Admiral" down to the "Midshipmite," everybody scored, and there was glory enough for us all.

This successful launching of "Pinafore" elicited the word "revelation" from a critical Boston press and public, and the Ideals became a fixture before they had sung Sullivan's tunes a week. Indeed, we "played capacity" for nine weeks, straight away—a record for that place and time of the year. During this run Adelaide Phillips recovered from her illness, and Von Suppe's "Fatinitza" was put in rehearsal for our second offering.

I have already named the officers who so gallantly manned the good ship "Pinafore," but before weighing anchor, I desire to add to the log the names of the rest of those who answered "roll call" when the waves dashed high o'er the Boston footlights. Every one of them, whether a "jolly tar," a marine, a sister, a cousin or an aunt, was a singer of well-founded and widely extended reputation. Take them all in all—

"A better crew of lads and lassies
Never sailed the royal waters."

Sopranos

Marguerite Brickett	Alice Barnicoat	Mrs. J. B. Mullen
Minnie Moulton	Ida F. Thoreau	Mrs. W. H. Gilbert
Stella Hatch	Vililla Chase	Mrs. A. Demont
Jessie Hatch	Viola Parker	Mrs. B. E. Currier

Contraltos

Carrie Lothian	E. E. Edwards	Mrs. Delia Smith
Jennie Robinson	Gertrude Parsons	Mrs. Charles Pratt
H. A. Brown	Fannie Dudley	Mrs. A. M. Nicholson
C. E. Gooch	Emma Wyman	Charlotte Blair

Tenors

Charles Winter	E. D. Daniels	C. T. Sylvester
George E. Boyle	J. J. Maloney	H. E. Bonney
Curtis Adams	H. A. Cripps	F. L. Crowell
James Montgomery	J. E. Burgess	H. Waterston
	C. Danforth	

Bassos

D. F. Zerrahn	J. A. Harrington	F. Fenniman
A. J. Hubbard	J. C. Turner	H. C. Jordan
H. L. Bradeen	J. L. Gilbert	H. F. Dixie
J. A. Baker	J. Burchmore	C. H. Reed
Park S. Rush	William Whitney	

Director of Chorus—S. L. Studley. *Prompter*—N. Lothian, Jr.

The spirit of comradeship and mirth, which for years afterwards pervaded the atmosphere of the Boston Ideals and made our organization like a jolly big family of overgrown kids, hovered over it from the start. As Miss Ober used to say: "My singers are ladies and gentlemen, and they are all Americans. They are not cross-grained and cantankerous like the imported artists, who, as a rule, seem to have been trained from childhood to hate each other and their manager."

On the last night of the season's run of "Pinafore," following an immemorial custom at the Boston Theater,

we went in for "larks," the audience gleefully entering into the spirit of the occasion, and everybody putting up a joke or gag on somebody else. Mine was rather a neat and whimsical little inspiration, I thought. Early in the evening the orchestra had greeted my entrance with a calathumpian fanfare and crockery-crash, followed by an untimely interpolation of the "Cork Leg" air, to which I responded with the right words and business, as though Gilbert and Sullivan had composed that classic ditty expressly for "Sir Joseph Porter" of the Queen's Navee. My innings came later on, at the very close—in the finale, where the principal characters repeat the tags of their numbers in a grand medley. It was my duty at this time to sing:

"I am the Monarch of the Sea,
And when I marry thee
I'll be true to the devotion which my love implants."

and Hebe responds:

"And so will his sisters and his cousins and his aunts."

But without any warning, I sprang the following substitute lines:

"I am the Monarch of the Sea,
And when I marry thee,
I'll abjure knee-breeches and wear long pants."

"And so—"

began "Hebe" Cayvan, but she got no further. The dreadful trouserloons line stared her in the face, and

she had no alternative but to turn up stage with her blushes and embarrassment, while the chorus did the best they could under the circumstances, and the curtain dropped amid a gale of laughter.

Dear old "Pinafore" nights! I remember how on another occasion—this time at the Globe Theater—when, upon the fall of the curtain after the first act, a loud call was made for Miss Ober, "Sir Joseph" stepped forward and said:

"I hope that this little interpolation in Gilbert and Sullivan's immortal work will be forgiven on this occasion. As our manager, Miss E. H. Ober, has not acquired the art of addressing audiences yet, she has requested me to speak in her behalf for herself and company. It is gratifying to have such an ovation from an audience here in this, our home, by birth or adoption, and, though it is said a prophet is not without honor save in his own country, I venture to say that the box sheet of this theater for the past three weeks shows that we have been a profit if not prophets, and your generous applause demonstrates that we are not without honor," etc.

Ah, those were palmy days! Only a little more than a quarter of a century gone, yet it is like delving into ancient history. And today the "Admiral" who used to pace up and down the historic deck, may sit alone and hum to himself:

"Oh, I am the Ralph and the Josephine,
And the Captain—and what's more,
The Buttercup and the Dick Deadeye,
Of the antique Pinafore.

Don't look so scared—I'm giving it straight—
I'm the band and the chorus, too,
As well as the ruler of the Queen's navee:
I began when the piece was new."

AFTER THE "PINAFORE" UNFURLED ITS SAILS

"It was thoroughly demonstrated last night that 'Pinafore,' Gilbert and Sullivan's most popular production, has obtained a wonderful hold upon the theater-going public, and that light, clean, witty and brilliant musical pieces will be the most popular style of entertainment for some time to come. Much was expected of this production of 'Pinafore,' the cast being headed by such well-known names as Barnabee, Whitney and Karl, and judging from the generous applause bestowed by the very large audience present, the highest expectations were realized. The theater was overcrowded by an audience composed of Boston's best people, many appearing in full dress. The cast was the best the piece has ever received, at least in a musical point of view. The stage was finely set, the scene showing a fore-and-aft view and two masts of the ship with all the rigging complete, and on the raising of the curtain a full male chorus of about thirty-five, with several seamen in the rigging, were discovered, and Her Majesty's ship thus presented was a fine looking vessel. When Sir Joseph Porter entered he was accompanied by seven marines and twenty-four young ladies who personated his 'sisters, cousins and aunts,' and the bright, pretty costumes of the ladies contrasted with the bright red of the marines, and the regulation dress of the sailors made a beautiful picture. All the artists were warmly received, Messrs. Whitney and Barnabee especially. Mr. Barnabee played Sir Joseph Porter in a quiet but effective manner, and the delicate humor of the part was made

the most of, while many of the broader features were suppressed. In the song 'The Ruler of the Queen's Navee,' Mr. Barnabee introduced a new and taking verse relative to Sir Joseph's natural inclination for water when a child. Mr. M. W. Whitney's Capt. Corcoran was a revelation to his friends, who had never before heard the gentleman in anything similar. The music of the part was sung in a full, thorough, yet breezy manner, and the wonderful range of his voice was demonstrated by the fact that very little of the music, which was written for a tenor, had to be transposed. Several of his solos, including the 'Fair Moon' at the opening of the second act, elicited encores. His acting was a little stiff, but this will wear off after a few performances. Mr. Tom Karl sang and acted Ralph Rackstraw in a most excellent manner. His bright, clear, ringing voice was heard to good advantage in all his solos, and the ballad, 'A Maiden Fair to See,' was given in a manner which we have not heard equalled, and deserved the hearty encore it received. The Josephine of the evening was Miss Mary Beebe, who on this occasion made her first appearance on the stage proper. She has a clear, pleasing soprano voice of some culture and a fair amount of power. Her solos, with the exception of the scena in the second act, the music of which she forgot for a moment, were all well sung, and the duet, 'Refrain, Audacious Tar,' between Josephine and Ralph, was finely given. Her dressing of the part was the best we have seen, both her costumes being in excellent taste. Mme. Isabella McCulloch made her reappearance in this city after a long absence, and, judging from her reception, was well and pleasantly remembered. She sang 'Buttercup' in a very pleasing manner, and received her share of the applause of the evening. Miss Georgia Cayvan was a pretty and pert little Hebe, and acted and dressed the part in good taste. The Boatswain of Mr. Arthur B.

Hitchcock was the weakest feature of the cast, his singing of 'He is an Englishman' being hardly up to the average. Mr. Frothingham repeated his familiar and excellent impersonation of Deadeye, though a little toning down of the character is advisable. The chorus was excellent. At the close of the first act a regular ovation took place. 'Pinafore' will be the attraction until further notice."—*Boston Post, Tuesday Morning, April* 15, 1879.

"Boston Theatre.—An immense audience, that filled the spacious building from top to bottom, assembled at this house last night to witness the first performance of the popular opera 'Pinafore,' by the troupe of favorite singers of Boston, whose appearance has been so long anticipated. Even standing room was gladly accepted by hundreds of persons, and the wall surrounding the parquet circle was lined with a triple row of interested auditors. The performance was one fully meriting this pronounced manifestation of interest, and by it 'Pinafore' has undoubtedly gained a new lease of life in the favor of our amusement patrons. The audience, moreover, was composed of our most intelligent people; of people who understand the sources of excellence in music, and who are enthusiastic only after their critical faculty has been disarmed and their consciousness of what is good is satisfied. That such an audience as this should be wrought up by the entertainment to a point of absolute approval is indication enough that the opera itself has been revivified, and that those who presented it have excelled all their predecessors in the same field; and these have been numerous enough and meritorious enough to make the new effort somewhat perilous, if it had not been undertaken by actors and singers of undoubted ability. It may have seemed singular to some—indeed, we have heard it suggested—that artists of such celebrity in other and more classical fields should have consented to let their light shine

on the 'Pinafore's' deck, but for our part, thinking as highly of the opera as we do, we cannot believe that they will gain anything but credit from this new departure. Many people make the mistake of considering 'Pinafore' a burlesque, and that word is, unhappily, suggestive of rather objectionable surroundings. Several good companies have badly mangled 'Pinafore' by treating it as of this class of composition, for while irresistibly comical, it is not *bouffe*, and requires to be handled with great care lest its delicate proportions be marred and its subtle quality of humor be lost. Moreover, it is constructed on principles foreign to opera *bouffe*. Its method is that of the classical operas, and its most exquisite satire lies in its imitation of the absurdities of such composition—and that they have these absurdities nobody who compares their artificiality with the occurrences and emotions of real life will be disposed to deny. Solos and choruses, duets and quartettes, and the other arrangement of voices which occur in classical operas are here duly presented, and one follows the other according to rule, and the whole motive of the work is directed by long-established precedent. To secure the highest development of the humor of the piece requires a knowledge of the more familiar operas, a receptive mind which shall unquestioningly regard the absurdities of the piece as so many real and sober facts, and a skill in acting and singing, and a faculty of repression which shall always hold a check over the inclination which exists in most men to attempt to improve the work of others. Such a combination of requirements can be found only in actors of a very wide experience or in those of a rare intelligence, and while some of last night's singers possess the former quality in a marked degree, most of them gained their success from their exercise of the latter. It is to such performers, then, as Messrs. Barnabee, Whitney and Karl and to Miss Beebe and Madame McCulloch that we ought to

look for the best presentation of the opera, and it is perhaps needless to say that last night's entertainment was perfectly successful when these people presented it.

"Musically considered, nothing is left to be desired, and the singing of Mr. Sullivan's measures was a revelation to us, and doubtless to many others. Justice has not been done here before to the beautiful music of the opera, but the voices which rendered it last night gave it a new charm. The sweetest measures fell to Mr. Karl, who took the part of Ralph Rackstraw, and all of his solos were encored, and a repetition demanded of most of the choruses in which his voice was prominent. He was in excellent spirits and voice, and it was a rare pleasure to hear his sympathetic rendering of the music. Mr. Whitney, as Captain Corcoran, excited great enthusiasm, and in 'make up' and acting, as well as in singing, he established his claim to being considered the best captain of the 'Pinafore' who has appeared in this city. His magnificent voice held the audience spellbound, and his quiet and natural acting added much to the pleasure of the audience. His song in the first act, where he appears among his crew and exchanges the compliments of the day, his song to the moon in the second act and his duets with Little Buttercup and Dick Deadeye were especially well received, and besides receiving encores he was presented with a large floral anchor and a bouquet of choice flowers. Mr. Barnabee gave a careful and sympathetic interpretation of the part of Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., and represented the eccentricities of that stuffy functionary very pleasingly. In the laudable endeavor not to burlesque the character he seemed to fall into the other extreme, and at times his acting appeared somewhat constrained. There were plenty of indications, however, that when he has gained a little closer identification with the character he will allow his own amusing personality to appear a little more, when nothing will

be left to be desired in the part. He sang the music of the part with great care and expression, and on the whole the high anticipation which the knowledge of his coming appearance had excited was fully justified. Mr. George Frothingham made a most comical Dick Deadeye, and the other male characters were well taken. Miss Mary Beebe as Josephine created a most favorable impression, and acted and sang in a most acceptable manner. Her songs were warmly encored, and the only blemish in her performance occurred in the second act, where she and the orchestra displayed a division of interests and attempted to present two different parts of the song at once and signally failed to produce an agreeable result. Several handsome floral tributes were presented to her. Mrs. Georgia Cayvan as Hebe gave a capital presentation of Sir Joseph's first cousin, and Madame Isabella McCulloch as Little Buttercup sang and acted charmingly. At the end of the first act all the leading actors were called before the curtain and loudly cheered. The chorus of some fifty voices was most excellent and added much to the interest of the occasion. The scenery and stage appointments were elaborate and appropriate, and every accessory—with the exception of the marines, whose drill is not all that could be desired—was in keeping with the requirements of the opera. Performances will be given every night and on Saturday afternoons till further notice, and the demands at the box office show a promise of large audiences during this week at least."—*Boston Journal, Tuesday Evening, April* 15, 1879.

"It is difficult to overstate the interest felt by the musical public of this vicinity in the performance of the popular 'H. M. S. Pinafore' at the Boston Theater last evening, and it is a pleasure to chronicle the fact that all the bright anticipations concerning the event were more than realized. The house presented an appearance unlike anything save

upon a Gerster night during the Mapleson season. Musical Boston turned out *en masse* and filled the theater from pit to dome, surged out into the lobbies, and got up to a pitch of enthusiasm during the evening that is seldom indulged in by the conservative Bostonians save on very special occasions. The 'ideal' crew were furnished with an ideal ship, and when the curtain went up and showed a full-rigged man-of-war, with a full crew engaged in the duties incidental to preparing for receiving an 'official' visit, the audience gave expression to their appreciation by the most generous applause. The stage was clear to the 'gridiron,' and the scene showed from the mainmast, looking aft, with the full rigging in sight, the deck set with guns, a 'practical' cabin and quarterdeck, boats swung from davits on either side, and all the fitting in the way of a full-rigged vessel. The men were aloft and on deck, and everything had an air of reality about it. The entrance of Capt. M. W. Whitney Corcoran was the signal for an immense outburst of applause, and when Sir Joseph Porter Barnabee came over the side it seemed as if the audience could not fully express its feelings. Lack of space prevents any detailed reference to the incidents of the evening; suffice it to say, in a general way, that the performers found every effort responded to by an audience with that electric appreciation which goes so far to make such an event enjoyable alike before and behind the footlights. Mr. Barnabee was given the head line on the playbills, and he earned the distinction. His Sir Joseph is absolutely inimitable, for he alone has succeeded in making the keen satire of the part apparent. His conception is absolutely a revelation of his dramatic abilities. Mr. Whitney's Captain was what might be expected musically, but few imagined that he would make such a complete dramatic success of the character as he did, his acting of the part, after a few moments of apparent nervousness, being all that could

be desired. Mr. Tom Karl proved a very valuable acquisition as the Ralph of the cast, and gave a thoroughly finished personation. Mr. George Frothingham, it need not be said, was admirable as ever in Dick Deadeye, and the audience fully appreciated his capital acting as well as his good singing. Miss Mary Beebe, the Josephine of the cast, is comparatively a newcomer to Boston audiences, but she will have a hearty welcome hereafter, as she has a soprano voice of great purity, and though not large in volume, of such telling qualities that it filled the theatre, and stood out prominently in the concerted music. Mme. McCulloch made a success of the part of Little Buttercup, and Miss Cayvan was as pert and pretty a Hebe as can be found in any of the forty odd companies enlisted in the duty of presenting 'Pinafore' throughout the country."—*Boston Herald.*

Chapter XXIX

ROUNDING OUT A REPERTOIRE

"FATINITZA."—BARNABEE, A POLYGAMIST.—BREAD UPON THE WATERS.—BRIGHT PROSPECTS AND A REVIEW.

"I think it is folly to train, upon the set views of others, artistes who show any capacity for producing good original work."—John Hare.

ON the Monday of our tenth week, "Fatinitza," an operatic frivolity which had suffered some rough treatment, from a musical and artistic point of view, was given an opportunity to redeem itself. Beebe, Phillips, Whitney, Karl and Barnabee constituted a quintette quite capable of taking care of the music, even though two or three of them were not so long since graduated from the church choir.

Whitney, the foremost American basso of his time, and hardly equalled perhaps in Europe, had a concert and oratorio reputation, but was new to opera. Adelaide Phillips, then in her prime, was a glorious contralto, English-born, but reared in America, and sent abroad as a young girl to study under Garcia. She had won her operatic laurels in the old Academy of Music, New York, when La Grange was the favorite prima donna; and later with Wachtel and Parepa Rosa.

Our "Fatinitza," as a whole, was scarcely less successful than the "Pinafore" which had preceded it. Beebe, as Lydia, was charming; Phillips, as Vladimir, and Whitney as Kanchtukoff, surpassed themselves; Karl, the Reporter, was fine and dashing; while H. C. B. made a very popular Pasha, and Frothingham contributed a frothy bit of fun as a dialect Sergeant. "Fatinitza" remained in our repertoire some twelve years—for this was the turning point at which Miss Ober decided to go regularly into business as a pioneer female impresario—and although its cast changed, its luck never did.

The harem scene with the Pasha and his four wives we tackled with some trepidation, as being possibly a trifle risque; but Bostonian tact and delicacy saved the situation, so that blushes had little or no mantling to do on the cheek of modesty.

Indeed, inasmuch as the wives were changed each season, and we kept the piece a-going twelve years, it is clear that I must have managed those forty-eight disturbers of family harmony with a discretion calculated to excite the envy of any Mormon saint, or furnish pointers to that quartette of shades, my illustrious predecessors, Solomon, David, Bluebeard, and Brigham Young.

The next season practically our first full campaign as a permanently organized opera company—Tom Karl was lured away from us by the siren song of Emma Abbott, and so we had to drag the net to find

someone, somehow, to replace him. Miss Ober's magic bureau was equal to the emergency, and yielded another prize-package in the person of Mr. W. H. Fessenden, whose delicious tenor had often scintillated against my cavernous bass on the concert stage.

The old English duet, "Robin Ruff," as intoned by "Fess" and myself, was a proverbial compeller of pathos.

In "Fatinitza," at the risk of upsetting the artistic equilibrium of the harem scene, Mr. Fessenden as the Reporter delighted to spring an irrelevant but stirring song, entitled "My Native Land," words by himself, music by Suppe, though the latter was written for something as far removed from comic opera as oratorio is from ragtime. It was supposed to express an exile's yearning for home-chicken, after a sojourn in Turkey-land. When he did finally leave the Bostonians, it was to swear allegiance to Mrs. Jeannette Thurber's ill-starred American Opera Company.

Though Fessenden did not make quite so handsome a sailor as Tom Karl, nor take to the "high C's" as readily, he was, nevertheless, a thoroughly able comic-opera seaman, and could spin a musical yarn or captivate a Captain's Daughter with the best of them.

In the harem scene of "Fatinitza" "Fess" and I were required to absorb capacious schooners of supposed champagne, which was really star vintage Apollinaris tinged with ginger ale to give it color, but served in genuine labeled bottles which had once held veritable

"sec" and "brut." It was a formidable dose, but I used to take it in, for the sake of art and verisimilitude.

Not so Fessenden, the wily Reporter. With a look of ineffable disgust on his face, he would turn his back to the audience, stand close up to the wing, take one sip, and heave the remainder on the floor of the scenery.

One night, feeling in the mood, I prepared an extravagant surprise for "Fess." I fixed it with the property-man to serve real Pommery Sec instead of the usual slop-wash. All the company were "on," and watched from the wings. The Reporter took his glass with the same old look of loathing, but the instant his lips touched the sparkling fluid his eyes bulged out, then disappeared beneath his massive brow, his head tilted back, and the pint of O-be-joyful was out of sight in the twinkling of a lamb's tail, while the company looked on and held their sides, and "Fess" realized that he had had the best of the joke.

Another joke which was aimed at the "champagne" and one which always brought forth a storm of applause was one which I introduced a number of seasons later. As the newspaper correspondent and myself were doing our drinking stunt, I stopped short, and turning to the emissary of the press said:

"This champagne is an orphan."

"Why so?" was the query.

"Because it has lost its pop."

Even to this day some vaudeville players carry

this joke along with them and spring it whenever a bottle of sparkling fluid is uncorked.

I shall never forget what happened at Detroit in 1887 when the Bostonians were presenting "Fatinitza" before a large and aristocratic audience. The offering was almost spectacular. The first act, showing a Russian outpost, had wagons, cannon balls and other warlike effects to complete the picture. When Sergeant Steipan converted his company into a theatrical troupe, two of the chorus girls came out with Detroit baseball uniforms on, and it took two minutes for the patriotism of the audience to subside. Then the improvised actors attempted an evolution, but the balloon hoops of one young woman caught in the buckle of a Detroit baseball belt and stayed there, and again the audience recreated. The actors marched off the stage, but the spectators called them back, and the young woman's hoops were held where they belonged by a large pole which another member of the company carried.

The harem scene of the well-known operatic creation was always a winner. We endeavored to present it in its true Oriental way. The curtains, for instance, were of rich oriental stuff in a confused blending of colors. The divans, real harem affairs, were upholstered in brocaded blue and gold colored silk, with red satin, hand-painted pillows. There was a superabundance of Turkish rugs and bric-a-brac, and two ebony tables with silver mounting completed the

decorations—that is, the inanimate decorations. Four pretty girls, supposed to be my wives, were elaborately attired in white lace bodices, trousers and veils, with sandals of a golden color. The skirt of one of the wives was of pale blue satin, with silver trimmings; that of another almond color and hand-painted. The third was of cardinal, with gold trimmings, and the last, white satin and hand-painted.

In the midst of all this Oriental grandeur was "yours truly" clothed in red trousers and cap, black gold-trimmed coat and white waistcoat, and endeavoring to be a reformed Turk, with a penchant for punning, singing, dancing and otherwise entertaining and delighting a harem and an audience.

To use the words of one of the critics of the time—"Everything, except Barnabee's smile and his dancing step, was expressly imported from Turkey."

But let us proceed on "our first big tour." With the two operatic conveyances, "Pinafore" and "Fatinitza," and the lady manager still occupying the driver's seat, we started out on a "tower" of the New England cities and towns, making good impressions and adding to the plethora of the managerial strong-box. Then we continued our trip in the same direction that the Star of Empire was wending its way, and penetrated as far west as Cincinnati—a city then supposed to be, in the proud imaginations of its cultured populace, the center and pivot of the musical universe.

We made a host of friends there, but in the end

discovered that the "lager beer cities"—that is to say, those distinguished by the prevalence of the German element—were very partial to the "moosic ov das Faderland," and did not take so kindly to the American article. In consequence, though we stuck to them with a perseverance worthy of a better reward, and scrupulously fulfilled the managerial *law*, the *profits* failed noticeably to materialize.

On our return from Porkopolis we repeated the cities and the railroad-tank towns *en route*, realizing the advantage of having cast our bread upon the waters; for, before many days, it was returned to us in big houses and a proportionate distribution of the circulating medium and public appreciation.

We invaded New York and Brooklyn territory, in this campaign of education, playing at the now forgotten Niblo's Garden in the first-named stand, and the old Academy of Music in the latter. The oldest inhabitant today may treasure a memory of those brief visitations, and a stray, yellowing program or two in the junk-shop preserve their record; but to all intents and purposes they were as "the baseless fabric of a vision," and left not a wrack behind. Subsequently we made appearances at Booth's Theater, Sixth Avenue and Twenty-Third Street, and at the Fifth Avenue Theater, which never was on Fifth Avenue, but a block or two distant, in the Rue West Twenty-Eighth. These "angels' visits, short and far between," made no overwhelming impression, either, but we clinched them later.

The demise of the 1879-'80 season occurred when Nature was awakening to new vernal life, and we ourselves had the means of rejoicing in our hearts and the treasury. We felt as did the fellow who received a large inheritance on the death of a relative, and, in answer to telegraphed inquiries as to the nature of the complaint of which the testator had died, answered:

"No complaint—everybody satisfied."

The next season to come was already budding with promise. In addition to the vocal forces already mustered, we expected Tom Karl to return to his allegiance with us, and Marie Stone to take her proper place in our galaxy of stars that sang together. Other operas were in preparation to bulge out our repertoire. Our sphere of influence was to be likewise expanded in a longer route. In short, everything looked lovely to the Bostonian vision, and the traditional goose hung at an altitude almost beyond reach.

Doubtless the kind readers who are following me thus far at the highest rate of interest in my devious paths of reminiscence, are living in eager hopes of something really exciting in the calamitous line.

Perhaps you are looking for freaks of "most disastrous chance"; for "the trials, dangers, fortunes I have passed" What? Moving accidents by flood and field; stuck in snowdrifts and shovelled out; trying to pass another train coming from opposite direction on the same track; held up by sheriff, and box-office receipts garnished; company walking home over

dreary stretches of railroad ties, and if in winter, putting on gum shoes so as not to be heard sneaking into town; stranded in alien hotels with weeping chorus ladies clamoring for money enough to pay board and washing, and get trinkets out of pawn; authors and composers close at our heels for that tendon of Achilles known as back royalties; defaulting treasurer taking to the woods with gross receipts; railroads holding personal baggage, costumes and scenery until we put up or shut up; orchestra knocking, stringing, blowing, or striking for home or more money; new production advertised, house sold out, scenery arriving in the cold gray dawn of the morning after; wars of the prima donnas, and battles of the lesser luminaries; tenor unable to sing for reasons beyond his control, or for no reason at all; soubrette's pet dog run over by a bicycle; only two dressing-rooms and hysterical comedy old woman declaring she will *not* dress with a chorus girl; ten weeks of rehearsal, ten nights of frost-bitten performance, ten dollars apiece for principals, and one dollar each for the rest of the company, etc., etc., etc. If such be your anticipation, gentle Zitella, prepare for disappointment. I am sorry, but I cannot cast any such offerings before you.

The remarkable fact is, that throughout all my operatic career I never belonged to but one company, and that one was never "up against" adverse circumstances of the foregoing comprehensive description.

Our record was unique in many ways. During the

entire life of the organization, under the name of the "Ideals" first and of the "Bostonians" later, we never jumped a Saturday pay-day—with the possible exception of a bad spell or two in our unfortunate last year, when, instead of continuing to look diligently after our own household affairs, we were persuaded to put our trust in a Trust, with all the expensive luxuries and complications "touchin' on and appertainin' to" such a connection.

Of course there were times when we had to turn out with a scraper and hustle in all the loose change that might be lying about and not working; but we always contrived to keep within the pale of solvency, and to dope up the poor old ghost so that he could walk his weekly round.

The condition of the walking was a matter of indifference to us; we had no clay sticking to our shoes, nor fringe on our garments, unless in its proper place. We never lost but two engagements, and one piece of baggage, so far as I recollect. Only one sheriff, he of Nottingham, ever made free with our belongings; and the attachment effected by him was one which bound the company and the public in closer and lasting bonds of respect, sympathy and affection.

In all the years "out" of our large company, only five passed on. Our orchestra struck only harmonious chords, and proved ever a loyal band.

We encountered one flood on the Mississippi, but that was more picturesque and interesting than danger-

ous. Our train seemed to float through a wild Western Venice, passing homes, cabins and barns, half submerged, with their occupants perched on the roofs or gazing from upper story windows, and nonchalantly munching quinine.

We skirted the edge of various railway accidents, but were never actually mixed up in one, beyond a jolt or two, and an insignificant "crockery crash." Our relations with the railroad companies were uniformly amicable. We never were able to beat them, and they kindly refrained from ruining us. They did give us rebates occasionally—also short cars when we wanted, and paid for, long ones.

In short, our traveling company had very much the aspect of a large family party out on a picnic jaunt, with incidental performances evenings just for the fun of the thing.

On the railroad journey by day, our special car was a continuous improvised vaudeville show. Everybody did "stunts," of the most variegated description. As a sort of combined father, uncle, dean and mentor of the bunch, I was dignified with the prefix of "Mr." attached to my common nickname, "Barney." Mr. Barney chipped in with the youngest and merriest in all these frolics; and our range of music on long Sunday rides between, say, Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Williamsburg, New York, was all the way from coon-songs to Beethoven. Birthdays, Thanksgivings and Christmas holidays never suffered neglect from

us—on the contrary, we were always ready to go out of our way to "whoop them up" for all they were worth.

Our fellow countrymen throughout the land seemed to take us in the same spirit in which we came to them. We were received with open arms everywhere. The advent of the Ideals was the event of the season; and pretty much everything in the line of current duties and engagements, except births, was postponed in favor of our date.

We were breakfasted, lunched, dined, wined, supped, stuffed and junketed by the best representatives of wit, music and hospitality, in all sections of this fair land, until good digestion began to balk at waiting on appetite, and health stood in abeyance, looking on the riot with fearsome gastronomical forebodings.

The male contingent was "clubbed" in every city, after the opera, with such cordiality that some of us had to hustle to pull ourselves together for the next evening's performance. The press clubs were busier at "boosting" us, than at "knocking"; and we acquired ponderous scrap-book tomes filled with notices that made a sinecure of the publicity-promoter's job.

I have always felt grateful in my heart of hearts to the "boys" of the pen and pencil fraternity for the spontaneous appreciation, the never-failing encouragement they have dealt out. One of my art treasures, which hangs before my eyes as I pen these lines, is a painting by the gifted Harold Frederic, afterward a

noted London newspaper correspondent, and a successful novelist under the pseudonym of "J. S., of Dale." This picture is a pre-Raphaelite representation of Tom Karl and myself as saints niched in cathedral aisle, with the Rev. Edward A. Terry—one of the best-beloved Catholic priests of Northern New York State gazing up at us in an attitude of adoration, while Frederic himself, in the guise of an acolyte, is busy burning candles and incense before the shrine.

In such a large collection of chords and discords as our organization involved, it would be manifestly absurd to pretend that "family jars" were unknown. On the contrary, we had them in as many varieties as there are of canned pickles—only they were not as extensively advertised as are the Heinz varieties.

Not infrequently there would be seismatic indications of operatic disturbances—shrill soprano and deeper contralto complaints, baritone barkings, tenor obligatos of fault-finding, and portentous basso rumblings and the like—but these were only passing summer storms, stirring up little clouds of dust, which a few tearful showers and the gentle breeze of managerial diplomacy soon dissipated. Anon the sun of mirth would shine out with renewed splendor, and, in the words of Longfellow, paraphrased:

"The night would be filled with music.
And the cares that infested the matinee
Would fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away."

Also the "long fellow" who is now reminiscing would stand like a good Samaritan by the bedside of the sick and the wounded, with chunks of consolation and taffy in one hand, and a cup of rhubarb tea in t'other.

Chapter XXX

THE IDEALS DURING THE OBER REGIME

LIST OF OPERAS.—DEATH OF ADELAIDE PHILLIPS.—NEW VOICES, NEW OFFERINGS, NEW TERRITORY.—MYRON WHITNEY WITHDRAWS.—MISS OBER SAYS "GOOD-BYE."

"No other aggregation of professionals under the title 'Ideals' could hope to usurp the peculiar place which these Ideals have secured in the hearts of the people."—Buffalo Critic.

IT is perhaps enough to chronicle that during the six years that our destinies were ruled by woman, in the energetic person of Miss Ober, we added to our repertoire, besides "Pinafore" and "Fatinitza" aforementioned, such classics, or near classics, as the following:

Name	*Musical Composer*	*Barnabee's Role*
The Sorcerer	Sir Arthur Sullivan	John Wellington Wells, a sorcerer
Boccaccio, or Prince of Palmero	Franz von Suppé	Lambertuccio, a grocer
Olivette	Edmund Audran	Duc des Ifs
The Mascot	Edmund Audran	Lorenzo XVII, Prince of Piombino
Czar and Carpenter	Gustav Lortzing	
Bohemian Girl	Michael Balfe	Florestein, a nephew
Chimes of Normandy (Belles of Corneville)	Robert Planquette	Baillie, the bailiff
The Musketeers	(V)	Abbe Bridaine
Pirates of Penzance, or Slave of Duty	Sir Arthur Sullivan	Major-General Stanley
Patience, or Bunthorne's Bride	Sir Arthur Sullivan	Reginald Bunthorne, a poet
Marriage of Figaro	Wolfgang Mozart	

Name	*Musical Composer*	*Barnabee's Role*
Fra Diavolo	Daniel Auber	Lord Allcash, an English traveler
The Weathercock		
Giroflé-Girofla	Charles Lecocq	Don Bolero D'Alcarazas, Spanish nobleman
Barbe-Bleue	Jacques Offenbach	King Bobeche
Martha	Friedrich von Flotow	
Fanchonette	Gaston Serpette	Hector de Caramelle
Giralda	Adolphe Adams	Don Japhet, Lord Chamberlain
L'Elisir d'Amour, or the Elixir of Love	Gaetano Donizetti	Dr. Dulcamara, a quack
Victor, the Blue Stocking	Bernicat & Messager	Marquis de Palsambleu

In all these hazards we picked but one failure—that made-in-France mechanical toy, "The Weathercock." With it we knew at once which way the wind blew. "The Weathercock" was a "vane" effort; so we withdrew it from the storm of public opinion.

In scanning the list of operas we tackled, it will no doubt strike the reader that between Offenbach's "Barbe-Bleue" and Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro" there is something of a musical chasm. So there is! But we bridged it and got safely across.

Following "Fatinitza," Adelaide Phillips had three successive good roles as Lady Sangazure, Boccaccio and Germaine—roles differing widely in style and scope, yet each of which brought out new demonstrations of her artistic resources and knowledge of stagecraft.

At the close of our second season this admirable artiste went to Europe in the hope of building up her shattered health. But alas! she never returned. She died in France during the month of October, 1882.

A truly great character, Adelaide Phillips has left behind a widely cherished remembrance, not only of a gifted singer and actress, but also of a noble, womanly lady whose great heart, with its capacities for loving and enduring, communicated an indescribable pathos to her voice and serious song, and attuned it well to the eternal harmonies of the "choir invisible."

Allow me to place before you a feeling tribute from one of Miss Phillips' dearest friends—Miss Ober.

"To my mind, Miss Phillips was one of the most remarkable and beautiful women in her character that ever lived. She gave to the world at large the example of a glorious artist, and the musical world is better because she has lived. But brilliant as was her public life, she shone the brightest in her own home. The dependence and comfort of all, with heart to love and brain to direct, she moved a very presiding spirit in their midst. No self-sacrifice was too great, no amount of love too intense to be showered on this home of her heart, where the fullest return of love and honor were given her in return. She died as sweetly as she had lived, suffering no pain—only weariness, and had lain down to rest, with no warning whatever that the end was near. She fell asleep quietly and awoke in another world—weary no longer."

After the death of Miss Phillips her mantle fell upon her sister, Mathilde Phillips, who justified the prestige of her name with a fine contralto voice and method, and filled the void in our company as acceptably as possible.

There were but two more changes, after this, during

the Ober regime. Mr. Herndon Morsell replaced Mr. Fessenden, the tenor; and Miss Geraldine Ulmar, with demurely pretty face, midnight eyes, and youthful voice, came to alternate prima donna roles.

This young lady subsequently became the inimitable Yum-Yum of the "Mikado," before Japanese progress had rendered that delightful piece obsolete. Then she went to London, enjoyed a brief but much-talked-of career, and finally was swallowed up in the vortex of matrimony.

To return to the Ego of this scattered narrative, it may be recorded that one of my own fortunate roles was that of the "dealer in magic and spells," in "The Sorcerer" where I had a very serviceable song beginning "My name is John Wellington Wells," and introduced rather an original bit of refrigerated stage business. After a descent into Hades, I was run up again on the trap, seated on a cake of real ice, wearing a linen duster and a straw hat, and agitating an enormous fan— an apparition which never failed to give momentary comfort and joy to my audience.

Two uncongenial characters upon which I wasted my time and alleged talents were the Bailie in "The Chimes of Normandy," and Florestan of the "Bohemian Girl." As I look back upon the latter, in particular, I despair of imagining anything more grotesque than my lank and gawky incarnation of the effeminate Florrie.

It was positively cruel! The Bailie was not quite

so bad, but it was a misfit. One night, in a fond but misguided endeavor to build up the part downwards, I interpolated "Simon the Cellarer." I shall never forget Miss Ober's look of mingled anger, pity and disgust, as she stood dumbfounded in the wings. That ended Simon as an adjunct to the "Chimes," but all the other characters rang true. Marie Stone proved herself a gem; and Whitney, as the old Miser, gloated over his gold as if he had been manager of the show, after a month of bad business.

We had great larks with the "Bohemian Girl" one night in Chillicothe, Ohio. The principal comedians, not being required in the cast, were left out; whereupon the local manager thought he was being cheated, and threatened to cancel the engagement. To calm his perturbed spirit, we told him he might announce that "to strengthen the cast," Messrs. Barnabee and Frothingham and the two unemployed tenors had kindly consented to appear as the Four Supers, or Guardians of the Castle.

This big-type announcement filled the house; and we played our menial parts just as they have been played from time immemorial, only more so—that is to say, we invariably did the wrong things at the wrong times, and did them so badly—well, that Marie Stone stood upon the stairs and looked down in dismay at the chaotic stage-setting, exclaiming:

"*Will you* just look at that Henry Barnabee and George Frothingham! as long as they have been on the

stage, not knowing how to set that table and those chairs right!"

All the others were "on," but came very near giving the snap away by failing to keep their faces straight when we, "The Big Four," came in with our outrageous antics. But the big audience howled with delight, and the manager was satisfied he had given them their money's worth.

We wound up that hilarious evening, after the final curtain by "rounding up" the fair prima donna on the stage, and compelling her to pour libations of beer for the company, as a penalty for not having seen through the joke. Joining hands in a ring, we circled round Miss Stone in a weird dance, singing lustily the following incantation:

Bis.—O Marie, O Marie, we pray you,
Bring those beautiful mugs from the bar!

One, two, three, four,
Bring those beautiful, etc.
Five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten——
(Repeat, same order.)
She'll do it! She'll do it!
She never was known to refuse it. You bet!

Bis.—Tra la la, la la la del,
La la del, la la del, la la,
La la la la, la, la!

Bing! !

"Boccaccio," "Olivette," "Bluebeard" and "Giralda" were four operas on our list which might have

been called, in the language of "la belle France," *des succes d'estime*—or, near successes. All paid fairly well, some fifty, some sixty, and some a hundredfold. In each of them, somebody came to the front, and in none did I conspicuously occupy a back seat. Each was good for one or two nights in the weekly repertoire. Still, the discriminating public was bound to have its preference, and to put its money on the favorites.

"Czar and Carpenter" and "Martha" were about in the same category as the four pieces above named, so far as popularity was concerned; but artistically they were above par. Whitney's "Porter Song" and Marie Stone's "Last Rose of Summer" are remembered yet.

"The Pirates of Penzance" was a standard performance with us, and remained in our list for twelve years. But the major-general's famous patter song was a third degree terror for me. It was the first real crack I had had at rapid-transit elocution, and quite sufficed to satisfy my ambition in that line. The thing got to be positively an obsession. I was like Mark Twain with that old *Atlantic Monthly* classic:

> "The conductor, when he receives a fare,
> Will punch, in the presence of the passenjare,
> A blue trip slip for a six-cent fare,
> A pink trip slip for a five-cent fare," etc.

Similarly, I couldn't shake off:

> "I am the very model of a modern Major-General."

Last thing at night and first thing in the morning it would bob up, and instantly my memory would be automatically racing through it, lickety-split. I finally rescued myself from a sanitarium by recollecting that my "Pinafore" song began with

"I am a monarch," etc.

and when I saw the other one coming, I would start down the King's Pike at a 2.40 gait, and escape for a time. But whenever the opera was on, I had tantrums until I had landed safely at the end of that verbal steeplechase.

When we produced the "Pirates" at the historic Booth's Theater, New York City, it was staged by James Ryley, the comedian, who was the first major-general who had ever sung the part. Ryley told me that after weeks and months he would still stick at that patter song, and on at least one occasion he found himself suddenly "dried up" in the very middle of it!

Our personally conducted tours were generally east of the Mississippi and in the northern belt of States, but with an occasional invasion of far Western territory.

"The Marriage of Figaro" occurred in Omaha—rather a forbidding place at that time (the early 80's) for so classic a ceremony. There were only two brick buildings in the town; and the sidewalks, when there were any, were of the rough plank species.

These details may suffice to indicate the primitive

character of Omaha borough thirty years ago. It has grown some since then; but, from first to last, its inhabitants have always been loyal constituents of the wandering stars from Boston.

The first day we arrived in Omaha, it was bitter cold—the weather was, at least. Tom Karl and myself, not being in the cast and not called for rehearsal, went out for a walk down the main road, in a forlorn hope of shaking off the blues. No go! A combination of sandstorm and snow blizzard was blowing in our faces. After making headway for a block or two, we descried a funeral procession winding its way toward us, down the long hill ahead.

"Tom," said I, "there comes probably the happiest person in this whole ——— town."

"If he only knew it," muttered the tenor, in gloomy assent, as we broke for shelter.

The "Marriage of Figaro" duly came off, however, and *that* was as merry as the traditional wedding bells. It brought out, with the exception of Tom Karl and myself, the full strength and talent of our company—Stone, Ulmar, Phillips, Whitney, MacDonald, Morsell, Burton—a septette with which Mr. Mozart himself might have been pleased.

But the performance was a bit shy in artificial comedy, however replete it may have been with the unintentional variety. The funniest thing to us was poor "Myron" (Whitney), in his first-night trepidation, shifting his guitar from one arm to the other,

and thrumming (in dumb show) with right-hand and left-hand fingers alternately! Frothingham, too, was a farcical wonder in his attempt at a Spanish gardener, made up like an Irish grandee, and speaking a mongrel dialect that might have made a hit in vaudeville.

However, Karl and myself, disguised as ticket buyers, organized ourselves into a claque out in front; and, in conjunction with Iron Hand, the Boy Usher, led some timely outbursts of applause that came in very handy.

After Omaha, Denver and Colorado Springs marked the Western limit of our "Ideals" tour. They were also nearest the sky, and the rarefied atmosphere of those altitudes affected us audibly in long-meter notes, and visibly in an unsteady gait. At one matinee I was obliged to have an apology made for me, lest the friends in front should think I was in a state of h**Ow**-c*a***m**e-*yo***u**-*so*, instead of in the state of Colorado. But, generally, the higher the topographical elevation, the higher rose the estimation in which our company was popularly held; and we kept steadily adding to our list of friends.

Denver was at that time the sphere of activity of one of the brightest individualities in wit, gentle irony and pure poetry that American soil has ever nourished. I allude to the late Eugene Field.

My first sample of Field, who was then "scattered over" the various editorial, reportorial and other departments of the Denver *Post* was as a dramatic

critic—not, in this instance, of my own efforts, but of those of an estimable gentleman who had unfortunately become stage-struck, and was mis-applying his abilities to Shakespeare. 'Gene Field's eloquent appreciation consisted of just two brief sentences, as follows:

"Mr. ——— played 'Hamlet' last night at the Taber Grand. He played it until twelve o'clock."

Colorado Springs, then as now the resort of "lungers," or persons afflicted with pulmonary troubles, had a grim species of humor, all its own, which we rather admired as evidence of the courage which meets the ills of life smilingly, and blunts the sting of suffering with a joke.

However they were the sort of people we were expected to make merry withal—and we did it.

Audran's pretty operetta bearing the optimistic name "Mascot" was first heard, so far as the Ideals were concerned, in Boston. Its charm and good luck were spontaneous. "Dolly" Ulmar as Bettina and W. H. MacDonald as Pippo, gobble-gobbled their famous duet in a languishing-sweet way that was vastly catching to the Puritans. Lizzie Burton was also in evidence, and the two "comics," Frothingham and myself, had a royal time with Lorenzo and Rocco, a pair of worthies from whom all the comic-opera kings and hoodoos of the past quarter-century are descended.

It was in this role of Lorenzo that I had one of those embarrassing little accidents from which a comedian

is always expected to extricate himself with some brilliant flash of wit. In making a quick entrance, an important part of my costume caught on the scenery and was ——that is to say, they were torn from their moorings. They were in imminent peril of dropping off, and the audience were *on!* I made a quick, firm clutch with one hand, gesticulated with the other, and to Rocco's cue, "Your highness, I have an idea," answered, "Give it to the costumer!" Then I added:

"Roccy, I have an idea also."

"Put a couple of buttons on it!" replied Frothy.

The audience roared, Bettina shook in a suppressed spasm of giggling, a stage hand fell off the paint-bridge—and the delicate crisis was past.

Another night, when I was playing an Englishman, one of my side-whiskers became unglued, fell off, and hung down, dangling by a single hair. With one whisker off, the laugh would have been on me; but I quickly snatched off both, remarking, "Guess I'll have a clean shave."

It was indeed a close shave, but the situation was saved.

The now common stage trick of "mugging," or silent singing illuminated by facial contortions and voluble movements of the lips without a sound being articulated, undoubtedly had its origin in this same "Mascotte." I invented it myself. Prince Lorenzo's entrance song, "I feel uncomfort-a-ble," being a favorite musical number, was always encored to excess. One

night, after we had exhausted our verses and our breath without appeasing the audience, a thought hit me, and I turned to the boys and girls and chorus, saying, in a hoarse whisper:

"Mug it!"

By a common impulse we all marched gravely down to the footlights and mugged—giving a complete but noiseless pantomime rendition of the song, without words. The effect upon the audience was stunning, and thereafter we were never let off without a "mug."

I neglected to copyright this device. In fact, there have been times and places where, in listening to alleged singing, I have felt an almost irresistible impulse to shout the command, "Mug it!"

"The Musketeers," opera-ized from romantic old Dumas, gave Mr. MacDonald his best chance, both dramatically and vocally, and he got away with it in splendid style. "Dolly" Ulmar and Lizzie Burton were very much in it, too, in a *convent*-ional way, but Mrs. Knowles was even (Lady) Superior. Marie Stone was vivacious in action, and coloraturish in vocalism. The tenor, Morsell, was a dainty one; while "Abbe" Frothingham was delightfully unctuous and *monk*-tuous. I suppose I was ditto in this same part, which I assumed later, during the long lease of the "Musketeers"—but "odorous" comparisons are not here in order.

Chicago bore up well under the Ideals' first performance of "Giroflé-Girofla," in return for which

patient endurance we also gave that great Lake Metropolis "Patience" ourselves, later.

In "Giroflé-Girofla," I utilized with much effect the wig idea which I had treasured up ever since my real-life observation of it twenty years before, whilst dry-goods-clerking in Hovey's store, in Boston—a billiard-ball head, plastered over sparsely with hair allowed to grow prodigiously long on one side, parted just over the ear, and carried over the top of the cranium to the other ear.

Whether as an effect of this make-up, or of the piquant "naughty" flavor from the original French which still slightly tinged this piece, it went very well. Tom Karl's *con amore* wooing of the two Giroflé-Giroflower twins, Mesdemoiselles Stone and Ulmar, also helped some. He made love so desperately that the sympathetic public would have it he was engaged to one of them—or both!

And there were others who achieved their little triumphs on the side. I had the pleasure of conveying to Whitney one of the most original compliments he ever received. Whilst I was being shaved, the morning after the premiere, the colored tonsorial artist who wielded the razor paused to lean over and ask me:

"Mistah Barnabee, whar d'ye pick up dat dar Whitney? My! but he sho' was great in dat Griffle-Groffle!"

We gave a breakfast to Mr. Whitney at the Tremont House, in Chicago. This by no means frugal matutinal

repast was a merited tribute to a grand artist and a right royal good fellow. It was epitomized in a punch-bowl of solid silver, inscribed

IN FRIENDSHIP'S NAME

Myron Whitney subsequently left us to join the American Opera Company, leaving behind him many regrets and a very large vacuum, which latter was ably filled, under the circumstances, by Mr. W. H. Clark.

"Patience" was, from the beginning, one of our banner successes. I took the greatest delight in elaborating my character of Bunthorne, and bringing out the fine points with which it bristles.

"Fra Diavolo," another dear old opera which our vocal and eccentric talents did much to popularize, ends the list presented by the Boston Ideals, under this company name, during the six years of Miss Ober's regime.

Our managerial mascot, the pioneer lady impresario, after having won the respect and admiration of her associates, glory for her organization, and material rewards for its members as well as for herself, wearied of the carking cares of the "show" business, and disposed of her interest, principal, and good-will in the enterprise to a mere man.

THE BOSTON IDEALS

"Of all companies now before the public, the Boston Ideals is most distinctly popular by reason, not only of its very high vocal merit, but of the feeling of almost personal

acquaintance and good fellowship in which its individual members are held by their audiences."—*Washington, D. C.*

"Mr. H. C. Barnabee is the soul and life of the company."—*Cleveland Critic.*

"There is a void in any opera the Ideals present without Barnabee's participation."—*Utica, N. Y.*

"The Ideals without Henry Clay Barnabee would be like Hamlet without the hero."—*Detroit, Mich.*

"The whole company is by far the best for light opera that was ever formed."—*Washington, D. C.*

"The superiority of the Boston Ideals, as they are familiarly called, is as decisive as the towering of Teneriffe over the level expanse of the sea which encompasses it."—*Chicago, Ill.*

"Their hold on the public increases with the years, until the public has come to regard them as indispensable, and their appearance is the signal for a rush."—*Omaha, Neb.*

"It is certainly beyond a question that no such organization of refined and cultivated ladies and gentlemen ever traveled through the country before in a professional way."—*Buffalo, N. Y.*

Chapter XXXI

FOND RECOLLECTIONS

EUGENE FIELD.—EMORY STORRS.—MARK TWAIN.—A SILVER WEDDING ON WHEELS.

"If I had my way, every city in the world should build a temple of music, a cathedral, so to speak, wherein nothing but the most beautiful masterpieces should be heard."—M. Ysaye.

I CANNOT mention Chicago without referring again to Eugene Field, whose acquaintance I made first in Denver.

'Gene's headquarters in Chicago was at the *News* office. He made things hum there and elsewhere about town, in the later eighties and early nineties. The copious "notices" with which he favored his innumerable friends in the dramatic profession were as fanciful as they were kind. They may have been heavily charged with fiction, but they contained no venom at all.

This is getting ahead of the chronology of my narrative, but I must recall right here the trick 'Gene Field played on me when I struck Chicago with the Bostonians, after having made myself solid there in my visit with the Ideals, some years previously.

He published an alleged interview in his "Sharps and Flats" column, making me explain to the public that I was not the original Henry Clay Barnabee, but

his promising son, who had lately stepped into the old man's shoes.

"His imitations of his famous father were marvelous in their fidelity," 'Gene wrote of me; "and the critic of the Barnstable *Palladium*, who had heard the elder Barnabee in religious concerts forty years ago, heralded the younger Barnabee as 'the dawn of a glorious lyric epoch'. . . . .'When father got back home at the end of last season,' says the junior H. C. Barnabee, 'he sent for me, and said, "Hank," says he, "I've 'bout made up my mind to let you take my place in our op'ry company. You ain't wuth a durn for any other business, and I guess you wuz cut out for a actor."' 'MacDonald took me aside and said that if I went with the op'ry I mustn't let on to anybody but what I was the old man. "What for?" says I. "Because," says he, "it might hurt our business if folks got onto it that the old man Barnabee had retired. The public is a curious critter; it insists on having its own way. Now, you and I know that I'm a heap funnier than old man Barnabee ever dared be; but, sakes alive! you couldn't make the public believe it."'

"In answer to our inquiries," Field's article continues, "Mr. Barnabee said that his father was living in retirement in Boston, devoting considerable time to the preparation of his 'Personal Reminiscences of a Centenarian,' to which Dr. Oliver Holmes will contribute a prefatory essay on 'The Early Comic Movement in New England.'

"The evening of the old gentleman's long, active, and useful life is fittingly beautiful in its quiet and repose; and the retired veteran finds peculiar satisfaction in the assurance that to his place in the sphere of lyric art his best-beloved son has succeeded without dispute or question."

In 1891 when Mr. Field was the guest of Mr. Will J. Davis at Willowdale Farm, Crown Point, Indiana, he wrote among other things to me the following letter:

Dear Mr. Barnabee: It will please you, I am sure, to hear of the improved condition of your justly famed contralto, Mrs. Jessie Bartlett Davis, who came to this sanitarium several weeks ago in search of repose and health. The lady has picked up a good deal since her arrival, and unless the village hay scales deceive us, she will be able to perform two roles at one and the same time for you next season. We are having her surveyed for a number of new costumes. On the whole, the outlook is most auspicious, and we shall expect you to testify, in your capacity of manager of the Bostonians, to the efficacy of these springs, their horses, dogs, poets and other livestock, in all cases and phases of physical prostration to contraltos. We shall send you presently a portrait of Mrs. Davis in groups. I beg you to convey to your estimable father the expression of my most distinguished consideration, and to believe me ever, dear sir, your admirer, friend and well wisher,

EUGENE FIELD.

It sounds just like poor 'Gene!

Another Chicagoan I can't forget was Emory Storrs. He was a brilliant wit and a telling public speaker. He had two fads, one, the collection of the rarest book

bindings, and the other a passion for neckties, and his rooms at the Leland Hotel, where I always met him, contained a library of the choicest volumes, in one section, and in the other the plethoric beginnings of a gents' furnishing store. On one day when I called, I noticed on a table a portrait of a lady, and as she was quite handsome, I ventured to inquire who she was. "That lady, Mr. Barnabee, is one of your strongest admirers," said Mr. Storrs. "It is Mrs. Storrs, she is a fine woman and she has only one *out*."

"Pray what can that be?" said I.

"Well, Mr. Barnabee, it is utterly impossible for her to give the answer to a conundrum correctly."

For lack of the proper comment to make, I said, "Well, that *is* funny."

"For instance," said he, "I came home from the court room the other day with this which I thought clever—'Why is the Constitution of the United States like a cat?' and the answer is 'One has pauses between its clauses and the other has clawses between its pawses.'

"Well, my wife thought it was great, and said 'Emory, we are to have company tonight, and when you are talking with the men, I will give that to the ladies.'

" 'Oh, ladies,' she said, 'I have got the funniest conundrum! I nearly laughed myself into fits today, and I know you will!' Of course they all cried out for it, and then my wife gave it, and added: 'There's no use for any of you trying to guess its answer, you could *not*.'

Edwin W. Hoff in "The Ogallalas"

W. E. Philp in "The Serenade"

Tom Karl as Ralph Rackstraw in "Pinafore"

M. W. Whitney as Captain Corcoran in "Pinafore"

Edwin W. Hoff in the "Musketeers"

Arthur B. Hitchcock as the Boatswain in "Pinafore"

Peter Lang, the original Guy of Gisborne, "Robin Hood"

W. H. MacDonald, the original Little John, "Robin Hood"

George B. Frothingham as Dick Deadeye, "Pinafore"

Barnabee as Bunthorne in "Patience"

Barnabee as Vice-Roy in "Vice-Roy"

Barnabee as the Vice-Roy in "Vice-Roy"

Barnabee as the Sergeant in "Rob Roy"

Barnabee as Vice-Roy in disguise

Barnabee as the Sheriff of Nottingham

Barnabee and Marcia Van Dresser in "Vice-Roy"

Barnabee in the last act of "The Serenade"

Barnabee in the second act of "The Serenade"

"And what do you suppose she gave as its answer? Well, choking with laughter, she said—'One has pauses between its clauses and the other has, oh, dear! I shall burst, I know I shall, the other has, has, has—the other has *kittens!*' "

I remember Mark Twain very well, and as the following has never been published to my knowledge and is too good to be lost, I venture to relate it here.

I had met Mr. Clemens at Redpath's lecture bureau, and as I was very much delighted with his bounteous humor, I was very desirous to hear him talk. One night he was to lecture in the Boston Music Hall on "Cannibalism." Unfortunately, I was engaged as a "filler in" at an entertainment in a neighboring hall, but I was determined to get a look at and even a detached hearing of the great humorist. Accordingly I arranged to have one of my offerings come in the first part of our concert and the other in the last half, and while the audience was patiently chafing at the delay in my appearance, I grabbed my coat and hat and made for the Music Hall. The place was packed, but I managed to squeeze in at the far end of the auditorium and get within long distance hearing and seeing of the lecturer.

Just as I emerged from under the balcony, the banner jokist in his most peculiar utterance said (mind you, the subject was "Cannibalism") "Ladies and gentlemen! at this point in my lecture, I usually illustrate my subject, but as I understand babies are

scarce and high in this neighborhood, on this occasion it will be omitted." And do you know, that so far as I could see or hear, not a smile or snicker escaped into the waverlets of air, in that vast expanse. As for me, I retired to the corridor in a perfect collapse of irrepressible laughter. It seems incredible, but really it was just so, and it all took place in the city of inspiration, intelligence and intellectuality.

But sometimes the joke is on the joker. The manager of the lecture course, just before the talk began, said to Twain, "My brother, who is a great admirer of you and your works, is coming here tonight and will sit in the front seat. I will point him out to you. If not too much trouble to you I wish you would address him pointedly and especially with humor." Twain assented, and for an hour he plied him in every way without effect. He fired off a rapid musketry of jokes and finally turned on a gatling gun of laugh provokers, but all to no avail. The man sat there silent, immovable, with stolid face and manner. Twain finished his oration. At the close the manager, after paying the fee, and carefully providing for himself the means of rapid transit, said to the bewildered lecturer, "Mr. Clemens, I entirely forgot to tell you that he is *stone deaf*."

Now wasn't that cruel?

Three notable events, to me, of this sextet of years that we were "the Ideals" were: my silver wedding, or twenty-fifth anniversary of my marriage; the

Whitney breakfast, aforementioned; and our Christmas celebration of 1884. The first and third of these were celebrated en route, at forty-odd miles an hour, as befitted a company of strollers.

The silver wedding breakfast was spread in a special car on the train from Cleveland to Toledo; and before it was over I had been duly and eloquently presented with a loving cup, "From the Company of We, Us & Co." It was a beautiful occasion—of the kind to be very tenderly remembered ever afterward.

The Christmas high jinks was all the way from St. Louis to Cincinnati, and took in every man, woman, child, official and employee on the train. I made up as Santa Claus, with headquarters in my stateroom, and our company's special car was a forest of Christmas trees. We sang, recited seasonable and topical verses, and old Santa handed out, by actual count, just 787 gifts to delighted recipients from all points of the compass.

In the great Northwest we planted our flag in Minneapolis and St. Paul, and it waved there in triumph for many years. The warmth of our reception always offset the frigidity of the climate.

The real estate boom struck that section about the same time we did, and I was induced to plant some of my surplus and other cash in the ground. It proved a permanent investment. The plant is still there, and has developed into a fine burial-place for taxes.

Chapter XXXII

THE ORIGINAL AND ONLY BOSTONIANS

A CHANGE OF POLICY.—FROM WHENCE THE NAME.—MARCUS A. HANNA, A LOYAL FRIEND.—"MIGNON," A WINNER.—NEW FACES.—"PYGMALION AND GALATEA."

"God speed the Bostonians! That my affections for those with whom I spent so many pleasant years has never lapsed, you who were with me and shared my successes are fully aware. My best wishes go out toward you, and with the knowledge I have of your plans and purposes, I am confident you will succeed. I know you will never lose sight of the fact that without actual merit you cannot maintain the reputation you have always enjoyed."—Extract from Miss Ober's letter to Messrs. Karl, MacDonald and Barnabee, September 15, 1887.

MISS OBER was succeeded in the management of our flourishing comic-opera organization by Mr. W. H. Foster, who erstwhile had been "out ahead" of us as advance agent, and who now, by some unexplained complimentary promotion, became "Colonel" Foster.

The Colonel re-enlisted most of us old campaigners, and drummed up some promising new recruits. Among these latter were Miss Agnes Huntington, and Miss Zelie de Lussan. Then, in a fine frenzy of impresariosliip, our new commander reached out for European stars, and engaged Mme. Lablache (daughter of the celebrated original of that name) by cable. Transatlantic messages came high in those days, so the

Colonel was brief, even to vagueness. In accepting the engagement, Mme. Lablache cabled:

"How shall I get to America? Collect."

"Swim. Collect," was the impresario's reply.

She finally came by the ordinary but comfortable steamship conveyance, and made good as a capable contralto and conscientious artiste. Miss Huntington soon became, deservedly, a favorite with the public; while Miss de Lussan, with more practical though otherwise questionable thrift, industriously cultivated the favor of the management.

A gradual change of policy soon made itself apparent by which the old repertoire suffered a sea-change and gradually came to be "cabined, cribbed, confined" by the well-defined limitations of one sprightly but scheming prima donna.

No sudden disaster assailed us; but after a second so-so season several of the principals concluded that their interests and those of the commanding officer lay in different directions, and so they withdrew in good order.

A little while longer the Ideals contended with the Real; but the treasury vault echoed forth a distressingly hollow sound. We then rested. It was time for a new deal.

Messrs. Karl, MacDonald and myself held a meeting, took account of stock, and found there were no assets but a name. Three of a kind, however, seemed a fair hand to draw to. So we put up and formed another

company. We couldn't very well call it by the old established name, and yet we naturally desired to keep up our connection with the glorious past.

Who would give us a name?

The friend who came to our rescue in this dilemma was none other than Kentucky's knightly son, Colonel Henry Watterson.

Publicist and poet, statesman and musician, hard-working journalist and princely patron of Bohemia, "Marse Henry" is the friend of artists universally. It would be difficult to name another prominent man of his time, not directly associated with the stage, so generally held in personal affection and esteem as is Colonel Watterson.

"What is the matter with calling yourselves the Bostonians?" he suggested.

We hailed it as an inspiration, and him as our deliverer and prophet.

The papers were drawn up and signed in Cleveland, Ohio; and there, in the Buckeye State—which, if she cannot claim to be the first Mother of Presidents, is at least their mother-in-law—sprang into being an organization destined to hold on high the standard of light opera, and to win for its members fame, fortune and many more friends.

There was special fitness in the company's dating its beginning from Cleveland. That fair lakeside city had long been one of our most delectable stopping-places. Its hospitality drew us from afar.

And Cleveland was the home of Marcus A. Hanna, of beloved memory, and from first to last our generous, staunch, and loyal friend. Under his hospitable roof, and in the bosom of his family, we had been cordially welcomed and royally entertained during many a happy hour.

In the theater which Mark Hanna built, he participated, so to speak, in our successes. When our time of need came, it was his generosity that sent us on our way rejoicing. No language of mine can express my regard for the dead statesman and his memory. The last time I met him, not long before his untimely passing, was in the corridor of the Chicago Auditorium. Grasping his outstretched hand, I assured him of my enduring affection.

"Well, Barney," said he, "keep on loving me."

I did, and I will.

There is a story about a teacher of logic telling his class that if any part of an object should be lost and then replaced, the identity of the object remained unchanged, and it was ever the same article. A boy spoke up and asked:

"If I have a knife with one blade, and I lose the blade and get a new one, is it the same knife?"

"Yes," the teacher replied.

"And then if I lose the handle and get another one, is that the same knife?"

"Certainly."

"Well, then, supposing some other boy finds the old

handle and the old blade, and puts them together again—what knife is that?"

The class was dismissed, on the same principle that actuated a militia officer who, finding himself with his company on the march suddenly confronted by a stone wall, and not knowing any tactical order for surmounting the obstacle, gave the order:

"Company dismissed. When you form, form on t'other side of the fence!"

The logic of events never brought us to that stone wall, because we always kept enough of the old company to avoid the semblance of disintegration. Otherwise, if the portions that slipped away from time to time during the remainder of our itinerary had been gathered together, we might have encountered some strong rivalry, and had occasion to echo the observation of the Duke of Gloucester in the tragedy of Richard III:

"I think there be six Richmonds in the field."

This all is applicable to the formation of the Bostonians. Change and rotation were inevitable. Juliette Cordon, Ricardo Ricci, and two young tenors to alternate with Mr. Karl, filled immediate voids; and, with a "scrumptious" revival of "Fatinitza," under the talented direction of Oscar Weil, and a good-as-new opera of Offenbach's entitled "The Poachers," we ventured forth upon our new career, and had the satisfaction of being everywhere hailed as the real survivors and heirs of the late lamented Ideals.

In their first season's race, the Bostonians, besides giving some of their old successes a chance, played "Mignon" and "Fanchonette" for favorites, and landed "Mignon" a winner. "Fanchonette" also ran, but the pace was too rapid, and she was distanced in the home stretch. It was in this last named piece that I did my "justly celebrated butterfly act," costumed as a yellow-jacket, with black stripes, and a pair of spangled wings.

"Mignon" was a beautiful interpretation, showing the Bostonians at their very best. I know this, because I was not in the cast, and I always took my night off to see Ambroise Thomas' romantic opera in preference to any other show which might be coincident in town.

The next two seasons brought about the subtraction of Agnes Huntington and Mr. Ricci from our ranks; the addition of Jessie Bartlett Davis, Carlotta Maconda, Eugene Cowles, Edwin W. Hoff, and Josephine Bartlett; the multiplication of honors and lucrative engagements; and the division of large and increasing emoluments.

"Dorothy" was another piece added to the Bostonian repertoire about this time, which distributed a fine lot of opportunities among the various principals, with the exception of Maconda, whose brilliant coloratura soprano was reserved for the regular "feature" programmes.

This was the operatic debut of Eugene Cowles, whom

we rescued from a bank (the Second National, of Chicago). He acquitted himself with integrity as Squire Bantam, and was not found short in the accounts of his musical notes.

"Pygmalion and Galatea" was a deft mosaic of home manufacture, being the classical poetic comedy of W. S. Gilbert wedded to music, some of which was original with Oscar Weil, but the greater part of which had not been original since Suppe and other European masters had composed it for operas of their own. Yet "P. and G." had many qualities of popular appeal. With Tom Karl and Marie Stone as the sculptor and the sculpture, Jessie Bartlett Davis as Cynisca, Maconda and Cowles happily cast, and I myself fitted as with a glove the fat part of Chrysos.

I never could fathom the failure of this piece to "hold them." It certainly started with a boom at Buffalo; yet on the "repeat" there the feeble response at the box-office was depressing.

It was one of those baffling divergences of mind between managers and artists on the one hand, and the paying or staying away—public on the other. As the metaphysician inquires:

"What is mind?"

"No matter."

"And what is matter?"

"Never mind!"

You never can tell, until the die is cast, whether a given musical score is going to tickle the public's ear,

or offend it. There is no more data to rely on here than there is for answering the conundrum, "What kind of noise does an oyster shrink from most?" the answer being, "A noisy noise annoys an oyster most."

THE BOSTONIANS

"And how can you forget the Bostonians—dear old Barnabee and our own Jessie Bartlett Davis?"—*The late Richard Mansfield in Chicago Herald, Nov.* 19, 1893.

"The company is too well known to need a recapitulation of its merits. Good looks, good voices, good action and good management make its work remarkably satisfactory."—*San Francisco Examiner, March* 25, 1891.

"As a smooth, evenly balanced and thoroughly excellent opera company, the Bostonians are superior to any organization in this country."—*Omaha Republican, Dec.* 22, 1887.

"The Bostonians have succeeded because the music-loving public believed in its founders, recognized its good intentions and found by experience the worth of its products.—*Boston Times, May* 27, 1888.

"Out of the thousand and one companies, dramatic and operatic, that come among us there is perhaps no other the members of which are regarded in any such spirit of personal esteem and good will among the people of this city as are the members of the Bostonians."—*St. Paul Dispatch, Dec.* 24, 1888.

"If it were in the nature of things for an operatic comedian to be a star, then assuredly Mr. Barnabee ought to be the star of the Bostonians. There can be no doubt that he is the most finished comic opera comedian on the stage. Others may have gained more popular successes, but Barnabee has yet got to touch anything which he does not adorn.

His movements are grace itself, while his fun is as natural as water flowing from a spring."—*San Francisco Post, March* 24, 1891.

"The clean-cut quality of their work, the artistic spirit that pervades it and the grateful absence of struggle for individual pre-eminence at the expense of the integrity of their performances are among the things that peculiarly commend the Bostonians to music lovers."—*Detroit Free Press.*

"The Bostonians was a company founded in good faith, intent upon producing good, standard operas, in a practical, thoroughly good manner, by capable artists. It was a company of musicians, and not a highly paid manager with a company attachment, or a twinkling star with a managerial satellite.—*Boston Times, May* 27, 1888.

"Having always had the stamp of respectability, without the blot of pretentiousness, one is readily willing to accept the Bostonians, socially as well as professionally, and that is a distinction to which comparatively few stage people are entitled, or rather entitle themselves.—*Buffalo Courier, May* 13, 1888.

"There is not a singer among them who could not be duplicated, and without much searching, but somehow the Bostonians have discovered a secret—a secret that teaches them just how to give a performance different to all others—a performance so perfect that nothing can be suggested.—*Montreal Herald, Jan.* 30, 1897.

"Vocally the Bostonians have long been superior to contemporary light opera organizations—indeed, it is principally on this vocal superiority that their fame has been so well established.

"This is not remarkable when it is known that, while other managers have considered beauty of form and feature

the essential qualifications, Messrs. Barnabee and MacDonald have consistently maintained singing talent to be of primary importance."—*Manitoba Free Press, Jan.* 21, 1903.

"Singers, like the seasons, come and go, but each year finds the Bostonians reinvigorated and strength renewed." —*Rockford,* 1903.

"The Bostonians have been together since the beginning of American lyric opera. It is not strange that they should be its best interpreters."—*The Herald, Montreal, Canada, Jan.* 26, 1897.

"Bostonians: Concerning these singers dispassionate criticism is an impossibility. Years ago they broke a passage into the people's hearts and from that place they have never been dislodged."—*Courier-Journal, Louisville, Ky., Nov.* 17, 1896.

"The Bostonians seem better than ever. Is it because we have been so surfeited with cheap, provincial performances of lyric and comic opera, been so bored by wretched countrified opera and unmusical outfits in musical productions, that these ancient and honorable relics of another, a better and truer time of sweet song and clean merriment should so charm a huge, enthusiastic throng of well-informed people?"—*Chicago News, Feb.* 9, 1903.

"They are engaged in the noble work of elevating the stage, not by setting themselves up as reformers and preaching against this thing and that, but by example, glorious example, and does not that always speak louder than words? They are furnishing entertainment of the highest order, take it from any point of view that you will. They are all they profess to be; they are more. They are excellent in every respect."—*The Daily Item, New Orleans, Dec.* 8, 1896.

Chapter XXXIII

TO THE GOLDEN GATE

KNOCKING AT THE GATE.—GATES AJAR.—"FATINITZA" IN A MORMON TOWN.—JOKE ON JESSIE BARTLETT DAVIS.—JOKES ON OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMPANY.

"If a rose may change its name and open its petals to the dew on the following morning without the slightest change in its native color or sweet perfume, why should not that favorite bouquet of melody, known so long as the Boston Ideals, be transformed into the Bostonians without losing any of the elements that accounted for their old-time popularity?"—Critic.

OUR first trip to California was memorable in every way—a personally conducted tour in a special train, over prairies, deserts, and snow-capped mountains—one continuous picnic of six days' duration, in which real redskins joined with the Indians of our troop in whooping things up.

No! We were not the first New Englanders who had invaded the land of fairies, fruits and flowers. A great many Easterners went out there when the real estate boom was on, invested their money on the country roads where flagged sidewalks were being laid in anticipation of the rush for lots. The rush did not materialize, however. Lots of money disappeared and the stranded victims rushed to our performances, glad enough to see somebody from home.

After a week of success and absorption of the glorious climate, we journeyed northward to the Golden Gate. Speaking of climate, reminds me to say that *climate* is California's long suit, and it is played at every stage of the game. No wonder it is a winner. A newcomer was once dining with a family who lived on the bayside of San Francisco, and was plying the host with questions as to the reasons for this and that.

"What is the cause of the profusion of flowers?"

"Climate!"

"What makes the grass grow the year round?"

"Climate!"

"Why does the fruit grow so large?"

"Climate!"

"What makes garden produce so cheap?"

"Climate!"

Finally, looking across the bay and noticing the mountain in the distance, he asked—

"Is there any way to ascend that elevation?"—and the answer was ever the same—

"Oh, yes! *Climb-it.*"

The San Franciscans received us with open arms and enthusiastic shake, not only of the hand, but just to enforce the welcome and make us feel at home gave us a sample of real hospitality. We had heard that the city was always wide open, and I assure you we found it so.

Coming home from the club the first night, we entered a billiard saloon at 3.30 A. M. The tables were

nearly all occupied while we were waiting for our "cues." I stepped up to an attendant and said, "You keep it up here a little late, don't you?"

"Oh, well!" said he, "it may be a little late for night before last, but for last night it is just in the shank of the evening."

He had scarcely uttered the words, when looking up with blanched face, he yelled out, "Boys, it's an earthquake!" Billiard markers began swinging, doors slamming, windows rattling, and our knees knocking together.

We all rushed for the street only to find the sidewalk just where we left it. In about a moment a couple of our boys came along and reported that the walls of their room at the Baldwin Hotel see-sawed like the sides of a cigar-box. Citizens said that the shock was the heaviest since 1868. The fearsome memory of it lasted me until 1906, when the news of the great disaster grieved me more than it surprised.

Our stay in the city was one round of success and joy. We learned subsequently that the people were very conservative in their judgment; but when once they approved, like the English people, they never faltered in their loyalty. That being the case we had every reason to rejoice, for we were afterwards made to believe that we were prime favorites, and our goings and comings of joy and regret were accentuated by the singing of Auld Lang Syne by audience and company.

"Moving Pictures" of Barnabee expression that run the gamut of human moods from sad to gay, impersonating individual character

BARNABEE AS SIR ADMIRAL PORTER IN "PINAFORE"

Salt Lake City, Denver, Omaha and Sioux City were stopping places on our way back home. We were a little doubtful of the reception of the four wives in the harem scene of "Fatinitza" in the city of salt which had not lost its savor of wifely multiplicity, notwithstanding Brigham Young's nineteen spouses, and the ruthless assaults of Ann Eliza, analyzer of the faith. Anyway, the Salt Lakers sent us away with a figurative back-patting, and though we returned many times we were always as welcome "as the flowers that bloom in the spring."

We closed that season 'way in the torrid month of July, winding up with what remains in the annals of the Bostonians as one of our historical broad-gauge gags.

In a moment of persiflage, Jessie Bartlett Davis had declared with emphasis that the comedian did not exist who could make her laugh, outside the regular business of her part. I determined to put her to the test.

In the first act of "Fatinitza" there is a masquerade scene where the cadets, headed by Vladimir in the skirts of the heroine, march on, disguised in all sorts of fantastic garb. The general sternly calls them to order, whereupon Fatinitza intercedes for them in soothing song.

Here was my chance. I arranged with the orchestra leader to strike up a march on the wind instruments, just as Jessie was about to begin her number, and in

filed a brigade of the Salvation Army. Our baggage-master led off with the blood-red flag; various unemployed members of the company, with the women folks in shawls and poke bonnets, followed, playing tambourines; then came MacDonald as a converted bum, and myself in a short-waisted coat and ridiculous "soger cap," beating the big bass drum; while a diminutive libretto boy brought up the rear, waving another flag.

For a moment, both the audience and the players on the stage were dumbfounded, thinking us a detachment of the real Salvationists come to snatch the Bostonians as a brand from the burning. Then suddenly Miss Davis caught sight of my face, and, oblivious of everything and everybody, gave a wild scream of laughter, and cried out:

"Great Scott, it's Barney!"

Then an uproarious wave swept the house, fairly carrying the players off their feet, excepting the burlesque army, which maintained a superhuman imperturbability of countenance. Fatinitza tried to sing her song, but couldn't; until, finally, we marched off as we had entered, without cracking a smile. Then the snowstorm began, the sleigh-bells tinkled, and they managed somehow to finish the act.

But, despite the wintry accompaniments, that was a red-hot July night!

Dear Jessie Bartlett Davis, that exclamation, "Great Scott, it's Barney," was so outspoken and

characteristic, and so funny. Of quite as much force, and more pronounced, was her unpremeditated announcement in the theater at Washington, D. C. We were playing the "Maid of Plymouth." Jessie in Indian character and dress was in stage conversation with an effeminate English lord, personated by Miss Mena Cleary.

It was time for Miss Waltzinger's appearance, and just as she came into the wings, what should she behold but an enormous rodent, sitting up and facing her. A wild shriek, and the two started in opposite directions, Miss Waltzinger for her dressing room, and Mr. Rodent for his first appearance on any stage. He made a quick entrance and rapid transit across the boards.

The audience was in an uproar of laughter and applause. The stage performers were struck with fright. Just as the "debutante" was disappearing, Jessie turned and saw him! Instantly forgetting the audience that was waiting, she grabbed the trembling lord by the shoulders, and with her expressive face, accentuated by a voice that could be heard out on the sidewalk, shouted, "My Gord! Mena! 'twas a *Rat!*"

The audience simply howled, but simmered down as soon as possible (though they did not entirely recover) and allowed the American and English representatives to fraternize in trembling accents, in terror of a second appearance of the "new beginner."

Now that I have strayed, as it were, into the anec-

dotal field, I might just as well pen a few more real stage happenings, to close the chapter.

I do love a good joke on myself, and that is a fact. How else could I have told of the countryman, seeing Robin Hood, who asked his friend if he supposed that "durned old son of a gun," meaning me, "was goin' to git the little gal arter all." One night, when I had a lavishly dressed character to perform, I was a little late at my dressing-room, with no one to assist me in my necessary adornment. I hurried on my symmetricals (the foundation for shapely limbs) pushed my feet into my shoes, hurriedly made up my face, and, without stopping, in my haste, to think, put on my embroidered white vest, my velvet coat, and walked onto the stage where the company was assembled, ready to begin.

I was immediately aware, by the fingers pointing at my underpinnings, and the suppressed mirth, that something was wrong, and looking down in the direction of guide-board fingers, perceived in a flash that I had neglected to put on my lace collar, my silk stockings and my trousers. Goodness! did I make a quick change? Indeed I did, just in time for me to walk nonchalantly on and finish the long act.

There was a shout of laughter from the corps musique as the curtain fell, which I quelled, "acknowledged the corn," and promised to pay at the close of the entertainment, at a nearby cafe. I do not remember what my lapse of memory cost me, but as the fun

and excitement had an exhilarating effect on the appetites of the free lunchers, I am sure my salary, on the next Saturday, was really a weakly stipend.

We had a young chap in our company whose brother had invested a large sum of money in his European musical education. He had a fine voice and sang well, but had not received any education in the grace of acting, and was rather angular and amateurish in his stage movements.

One night his brother came to witness his performance, in a small part, and at the close came to his dressing-room. The singer, with a confident air, accosted his brother with the words, "Well, Jim, how do you think I got on?"

"Oh," said the investor, "you did very well, but I think you would have done better on castors." That was a chilly reply, but it was just what he *k-needed*. After that he limbered up.

A funny thing happened in Baltimore. Marie Stone, our gilt-edged prima donna, owned a small black and tan dog, which she took to the theater in a basket every night when she was in the cast, and, besides keeping tabs on the cues and the opera, that dog knew, to a second, when it was time to go home, and always recovered from his nap in season to join her.

The dog was a great pet in the company, but would not play, unless the playee would first assume a recumbent position, and then he was *it* for a frolic. One

night, the opera was "Patience," with Marie in the title role. The dog, taking advantage of an opportunity, jumped out of his basket and ran down to the first entrance; seeing the girls all in aesthetic and reclining attitudes, for the purposes of the scene, his canine instinct told him they were there for his pleasure. He skipped on, and began dancing up and down in front of them. The audience applauded vociferously. The eight or ten inches of canine black and tan, resenting the intrusion, deliberately walked down to the foot-lights and delivered himself of several snappy barks. The more the audience applauded the more he tore off the bark, till "Patience," who had missed the contents of the basket, forgot her patience, and in a frenzy of chagrin, rushed in and seizing the miniature barking apparatus by the neck, rescued him from the unequal contest. That was his farewell to the stage.

A Hebrew by the name of Joe (of course his name had a conclusion, but it has escaped my memory) was a favorite of our company, on account of his ready wit, particularly in repartee. No one could ever get away with him. One day we had a long and tiresome rehearsal, everybody was sleepy. I was sitting in a chair, when Joe came stealing up to me, and said, in a low tone, "Mister Barnabee, do you think you will have any one night stands next season?" "Well, I suppose so, Joe, why do you ask?" "Well, I think, Mister Barnabee, you might put one in Jerusalem, it is my happy home." I stopped the rehearsal long

enough to wake them up by telling them of their prospects for another season, in a favor to "Joe."

The next one is a dandy on George Frothingham, a gentleman well-known in operatic circles. A society man of New York had fallen desperately in love with our beautiful contralto, and was in the habit of telegraphing ahead for flowers, and each night she sang, a veritable florist's display was passed over the footlights. To keep in touch with the company, he frequently sandwiched a basket of champagne and boxes of cigars for the male principals. All were remembered excepting George. He was left out in the wintry blast. He was very much chagrined, but not to be ignored, he wrote the gentleman, that, having played the part of Friar Tuck seventeen hundred times without a break, he thought he was entitled to remembrance. When the next invoice came there was a box for George. He seized it triumphantly, bore it to his dressing room, set it up in a corner where he could look at it and think what a time he *would* have with those Perfectos when the opera was finished, and he was ready for home. Our hero opened the box in the presence of his dressing-room companion. It was a beautifully decorated affair, the inside being lined with silver paper and tissue, and on top a note, which George opened with trembling hand and read:

"*Dear Frothingham,*—In a letter received from you, you write that you have played the part of Friar Tuck seventeen hundred times. If you have, then you have made a request

that number of times from the gaol window for an article of refreshment, which has never been granted. This is an endeavor to supply the omission."

With dazed look "Frothy" threw off the covering and exposed what do you think? A tripe sandwich!!! Then the music started and the air blazed with maledictions. No one dared to ask the comedian how he enjoyed the Perfectos.

Our prima donna was the victim of another joke perpetrated by herself, in Butte, Montana. Marie Stone, alias "Suzette," in one of her exits in the opera of that name, was in the habit of carelessly humming some familiar air. "Annie Rooney" was just coming in vogue, and the prima donna had on this particular day just learned the tag, and she hummed it as she passed out at the first entrance. Amidst the most uproarious applause, she came back and bowed her thanks. Nay, nay, Pauline! that will not do, we want the song! and the uproar continued. She came back again, wildly gesticulating that she was unfamiliar with it. Never mind! we want it! The situation was funny, at first, but was getting to be embarrassing, when the genial comedian arose, and securing the attention of the audience reminded them that the opera was "Suzette" and not "Annie Rooney" and that the obliging prima donna could not keep on all night singing the only line she knew of it. Then they subsided, but it looked for a few minutes like reading the riot act to the miners.

In all of our travels through our beloved country we always held the open sesame to clubdom. The portals opened wide, and we were always welcome guests. To write a complete history of these more or less hilarious good times would require at least three sets of reminiscences.

One of the most original, unique, and never to be forgotten seances, in which I was a partial participant, occurred in the early days of our organization, when we were in doubt as to the proper behavior with, or in, a club. My partner and myself were invited to a Saturday night revel of a club whose meetings for disturbing or being disturbed were rendered less possible by being held on the top floor of a high building where "high jinks" would be appropriate. The preliminaries were an open fireplace, with a receiver hanging over the embers, always full of hot rum punch. On a table in the middle of the room was a large square of ice, scooped out and filled with raw oysters, the condiments for preparing the dish distributed, with the plates, about the ice house. On the other side of the room was a table spread with dainties for special guests. On this occasion we were the special guests.

Soon after partaking of rum punch and oysters the "jinks" began. Everybody was called upon for a stunt and everybody did one, varied of course by the stunter, according to the condition of his inner self.

I must stop here to write that one of the rules of

the organization was, that *whatever happened*, no notice of it *whatever* was to be taken.

After a prolonged and hilarious vaudeville, we took seats for the specialties, which were fine and well-served. Then the feast of reason and flow of soul began and the presiding officer called upon me. At this junction a fine-looking gentleman slapped his hand on the table and said, "There! now I am to have the desire of my life. For years I have heard of Mr. Barnabee! now I am to hear him, and see him in all his glory."

I rose and began my acknowledgments, but before I had articulated a dozen words, the rum punch claimed him for its own, and he sank into deep and gentle slumber. No one paid any attention to him and I finished my harangue. There were others, and during the whole affair my partner and I were nearly doubled up with suppressed mirth, but we obeyed the rule and said nothing. The vaudeville was now more pronounced and disregardful of strict propriety.

Presently, in there walked a dapper looking chap with red curly hair and full dress suit. He was loaded to the guards. With unsteady gait, he walked up to the fireplace and took a great tumbler full of rum punch. Then he meandered to the table, filled a soup plate even full of oysters, reached out for the salt and pepper and the rum punch asserted itself. He threw up his hands, fell back with a thud, the plate turned upside down on his broadcloth pants, and the

oysters were distributed all over his anatomy. One large one lay across his ample shirt front, another lodged over his left eye, while two or three others rested in his curly locks. Oh! he was a sight! No one went near him, but the fun continued.

I could stand it no longer, so I winked to my partner and we escaped from the orgies. It was then six o'clock in the morning and I give you my word, ladies and gentlemen, that when we closed the door, the gentleman was still sitting at the table listening silently for Barnabee, while our curly-headed friend lay like a warrior taking his rest, with his oyster stew about him. When we reached the sidewalk a heavy snowstorm was prevailing, but we did not mind, and sat down upon the curb, and gave ourselves up to explosions of laughter that waked up our friends in the next street who were sitting up waiting for us. That was the rumpunchiest night I ever experienced.

Speaking of sleepers reminds me of another story. On a certain night in February, 1898, those who attended at Baldwin's Theater in San Francisco were treated to a scene not down in the book, but which was so amusing as to divert attention from the stage to "the royal box." The occupant of the box was a smooth-shaven fellow, fair of complexion, well-groomed and correctly dressed. The opera interested him for a time and then his attention waned. It waned so rapidly, indeed, that the arms of Morpheus found no difficulty in enfolding him within a deep embrace.

His head fell forward and, after a few intermittent jerks when memory returned, he slept the sleep of the just. The opera proceeded, the singers warbled and the man in the box continued to enjoy his nap. Miss Nielsen was singing a lay full of birdlike trills, the final note of which penetrated in its piercing clearness to the dulled ear of the sleeper. He awoke with a start and, noticing the audience was applauding, joined in calling for an encore for the song, of which he had not heard a word. I don't remember whether Miss Nielsen responded, but I have a very vivid picture of this particular "Cupid asleep" and "Cupid awake."

I might go on and relate scores of stories about the Bostonians and their experiences. I will close this chapter with one showing how one woman can become infatuated with another.

Once Miss Davis (of course, I mean Mrs. Davis) received a letter from a woman who had gone completely daft over her. She declared that her love for her was akin to pain and filled four closely written pages so full of red-hot love messages that it frightened Miss Davis. She said she would call at 9 o'clock the next day to see her inamorata. That is an hour at which no theatrical people are ever stirring, unless the stern necessity of catching a train gets them out. But promptly at the hour the woman appeared. Miss Davis told the maid that no one was to be admitted until 3 o'clock, that she was ill. Instead of having the desired effect of driving the woman away, it simply

kept her there, for she sat down in the hall and waited patiently for the appointed hour. By 3 o'clock the reports brought from the hall had really made Miss Davis very nervous and a little frightened. She sent word to the woman that she could see no one and for her not to come again, as she could not see her. The woman was not young and she did not succeed in seeing her charmer, but she always lavished presents on her.

Chapter XXXIV

"ROBIN HOOD"

"Linked with the opera 'Robin Hood' the name of Barnabee is almost as closely allied as that of Jefferson with 'Rip Van Winkle.' Joe Jefferson is the only Rip—and Henry Clay Barnabee is the only sheriff of Nottingham—and woe to the unlucky comedian who has to follow in his footsteps unless he be of a high school of art indeed."—Atlanta Journal, March 14, 1903.

THE season of 1889-90 brought us in touch with Messrs. Harry B. Smith, librettist, and Reginald de Koven, musical composer, both of Chicago. They had recently produced their first joint effort, "The Begum," with what may be called either failure as a whole or success in spots, as you choose.

They tried the Bostonians with a second and more ambitious work, "Don Quixote." In our kindly-disposed judgment, we liked the music, and decided to take chances on the book. We did so—during one season, and that sufficed to prove that we were not destined to renew the triumphs of the immortal Cervantes. The galleries expected extravagant fun from the Don, and were disappointed; while the high-brows resented the un-literary liberties taken with their admired character.

However "Don Quixote" was good in the repertoire for at least one windmill slugging-match a week, on our second trip to the Pacific Coast.

This time we took with us, as wardrobe mistress, the real and original Mrs. Malaprop of the nineteenth century, in the person of Clara—that's all—the wife of our assistant stage manager. She was a rare jewel, and in serious relations of life, loyal, industrious to the end. For many years she was indispensable to us, both as an aid and as a companion.

Clara, like her spouse, was English. A free untrammeled use and mis-use of the letter H was her natural birthright; while in the "nice derangement of epitaphs" she surpassed even Sheridan's imagination. Her husband summed up her characteristics, and incidentally his own, when he would say:

"It's simply 'ell, the way she goes for me. But then, Clara's a dear good soul!"

She was funnier than any libretto we had. Many of her unpremeditated bon mots took their savor from circumstances, the passing moment—they were like the foam upon the river, and not of a nature to go ringing down the corridors of time. However, a few choice specimens still survive.

In the old St. Charles Theatre, N. O., she had found a little room where she fixed things to suit herself. One day someone said, "You have a cozy little place here, Clara." "Yes," remarked Clara, "it was full of refuge and rubbage but I got it cleaned out."

She had a little cottage at Hough's Neck, Quincy, Massachusetts. On clear days the great dome of the State Capitol in Boston could be seen. She was

proud of that fact, but always called it the "Gilded doom."

Going over the mountains, she said:

"H'I don't like these 'igh hattitudes—they makes me whiz. Just 'ear me hears sing!"

Getting up one morning with "a cold in the 'ead," she was asked how she came by it, and replied:

"Oh, like a hass, I slept with the transient hopen, and got it good and proper."

The only coastwise defence put up for "Don Quixote" in San Francisco was, "Well, it will take more than one bad opera to kill the Bostonians."

We got another one, entitled "Suzette," with which to test the friendship of the Golden Gate city. It was thought to be a *possibility*, but the prefix *im* soon had to be attached. It served merely as a stop gap between failures—for our skies of fate now began to be heavily overcast.

A herald ray of sunshine, though, presently struck us at Los Angeles, when we received a peace-offering which Smith and DeKoven had brought us in extenuation of "Don Quixote." That herald ray was about to burst upon a waiting world in dazzling effulgence, when we "tried out" the new piece in Chicago, on the ninth of June, eighteen hundred and ninety!

Dear reader, have you not guessed? It seems almost a superfluity to inscribe here the magic name—

ROBIN HOOD

It was a spontaneous hit from curtain to curtain. "A mint," was what a prominent theatrical manager called the production, at its premiere; and so it proved.

The "Ballade of Robin Hoode" is one of the oldest relics of English poetry. The story of the brave, gallant robber who never robbed anybody that wasn't able to be robbed handsomely, and who dispensed his plunder with a lavish hand among poor widows and orphans, has always had a singular interest for all generations. It has made frequent reappearances in literature, notably in Scott's "Ivanhoe."

Considering the fact that the author has seen fit to take from, add to, and embellish the original tale of "Robin Hood," to fit the requirements of the stage, it may not be out of the way to give a brief outline of the story as presented by the "Bostonians."

Robert, earl of Huntington, in the reign of Richard I, upon coming of age is fraudulently deprived of his inheritance by the sheriff of Nottingham, who, in order to possess himself of the lion's share of the estate, contrives, in the absence of the king, to confer it upon Sir Guy of Gisborne, his protege, together with the title and also the hand of the Lady Marian, his ward, whom an edict of the king has betrothed to the Earl of Huntington. Robert, exasperated by this nefarious proceeding but powerless to resist, joins a band of outlaw yeomen. As their leader, under the name of "Robin Hood," he becomes the terror of the rich and highly born, while providing for and giving with a generous

hand to the poor and oppressed, by whom he is greatly beloved. Through the treachery of one of his men he is apprehended and condemned to be hanged; and his arch enemy, the sheriff, is on the point of succeeding in all his iniquitous schemes. The marriage of Guy of Gisborne to the fair Marian is on the eve of consummation, as well as that of Annabel, the betrothed of Alan-a-Dale, whom the sheriff has coerced into a union with himself, when the king returns from the crusades. Robin Hood is pardoned and united to Maid Marian and the sheriff and his adherents brought to confusion.

Briefly—and this will epitomize my views upon the operatic book in general—the play told a pretty and interesting story. Constructively, it has a clear beginning and a logical end, a climax at the effective point, and the element of suspense is well sustained throughout, to be satisfactorily wound up at last; the whole plot revolving consistently around the leading comic character.

These practical merits had homely illustration in the remark of a countryman to his neighbor, reported to me by the cornet-player in the orchestra.

The two had been nudging each other all the early part of the evening; and when the Sheriff of Nottingham emerged from his house, leading Annabel to the wedding ceremony, one said, with some feeling:

"Bill, do you s'pose that durned old son-of-a-gun is goin' to git the little gal, arter all?"

Naturally, I endorse the general opinion that the piece owed its initial, and probably its permanent, success to its first interpreters—an unrivalled ensemble of its kind, including

Marie Stone	W. H. MacDonald
Jessie Bartlett Davis	Edwin Hoff
Carlotta Maconda	Eugene Cowles
Josephine Bartlett	George B. Frothingham

and—excuse the reiteration, please!—Henry Clay Barnabee.

The music, third of the important factors to render "Robin Hood" critic-proof, is bright, tuneful, pleasantly reminiscent, and happily wedded to the lyric words. With abridgements and additions which suggested themselves from time to time as the successive seasons rolled on, both musical score and book evolved into a well-nigh perfect whole, and it remains today practically as it was first staged by Fred Dixon.

In the presentation of "Robin Hood" and other works, during the dozen years of the Bostonians' subsequent career, a whole battalion of versatile artists, all worthy and some famous, assisted, with uniformly satisfactory results. To write of these individually as each and all merit, would be to unwarrantably exceed present limits of time and space. I must content myself here with merely writing their names, each accompanied by tender recollections and kind thoughts. As in the up-to-date playbill, the characters are named in the order of their appearance:

Maid Marians
Marie Stone
Juliette Corden
Caroline Hamilton
Camille D'Arville
Fatmah Diard
Bertha Waltzinger
Helen Bertram
Hilda Clark
Margaret Reid
Eloise Morgan
Alice Nielsen
Helena Fredericks
Grace Cameron
Estelle Wentworth
Frances Miller
Blanche Morrison
Grace Van Studdiford
Antoinette Brown
Gertrude Zimmer

Alan-a-Dales
Jessie Bartlett Davis
Flora Finlayson
Lucille Saunders
Marcia Van Dresser
Olive Celeste Moore
Adele Rafter
Maud Leekley
Kate Condon
Legitimate successor of Jessie Bartlett Davis.

Annabels
Carlotta Maconda
Grace Reals
Mena Cleary
Maud Ulmer
Cora Barnabee
Alice Nielsen
Grace Van Studdiford
Florence Quinn
Lea Van Dyke
Carolyn Daniels
Alice Judson

Dame Durden
Josephine Bartlett

Robin Hoods
E. W. Hoff
Tom Karl
Harold Blake
Ferdinand Schutz
Jack Still
Joseph Sheehan
William Philp
Albert Parr
Frank Rushworth
William C. Weedon
Vernon Stiles
Harold Gordon
Douglas Ruthven
Edward Johnson

Guy of Gisbornes
Peter Lang
W. H. Fitzgerald
Charles Lander
Campbell Donald

Friar Tuck
George B. Frothingham

Will Scarletts
Eugene Cowles
William Broderick
John Dunsmuir
Allan Hinckley
Howard Chambers
J. J. Wiebly

Little Johns
W. H. MacDonald
Charles Hanley
Joseph Ratliffe
W. M. Dorrington

Sheriff of Nottingham
Henry Clay Barnabee

It was always an all-star cast. Each of the names here written recalls some individual point of excellence, some beauty of voice, face or figure, some grace of action, some thrill of joy, emotion or mirth, some cherished remembrance of song or opera.

The celebrated number "O Promise Me" was not in the original version of "Robin Hood," but was introduced in the English production, and afterward arranged for Jessie Bartlett Davis. How she did sing it! I have already stated in one of the preceding

chapters how, during the nineteen hundred times we performed the opera, I enjoyed listening to that gorgeous contralto voice pouring forth its deep rich notes like a nightingale.

There was but one Friar, one Dame Durden, and practically but one Sheriff; though Jerome Sykes, at one time our stage-manager, replaced me a few times in this role. Among the fair Annabels, I may be pardoned for specially mentioning one of my own kith and kin, my little niece, Cora Barnabee.

What "Robin Hood" was to me, I have no words to tell.

It was the crowning of my humble career, in the creation of a character the pleasant memory of which, I am not without hope, will endure after my final exit from this earthly stage. I have often wondered at the impression it has made; for it cannot be denied that the Sheriff was a sly, cunning, dishonest old rogue. My heart has been made glad with the thought, encouraged by the partiality of kind friends, that possibly some flavor of the personal individuality of the man behind the mask shone through the disguise and compensated for the simulated wrong-doing in the delineation.

If so, then I am doubly grateful to the good Providence that sent it to me, to help lighten the heart of worry, smooth the brow of care, and carry the message of smiles to the hundreds of thousands who were attracted and held by dear old "Robin Hood."

We opened its first season in a rash endeavor to make the Boston Music Hall an operatic head center. The scheme did not work. We were obliged to enter 1,300,000 cents on the loss column of the ledger as a memorial of our lack of business or horse sense.

But we quickly made up this deficit in a long road tour, during which we tried keeping up the public appetite for "Robin Hood" by alternating with such heavy Grand Opera propositions as "Trovatore" and "Carmen," in English.

Alas! the United States language does not lend itself gracefully to the rhythmic phrases of Italian or French music. "Addio, Lucia?" for instance, is all right in Italian; but when, in our own beloved vernacular it becomes "Good-bye, Lucy!" the effect is painfully suggestive of a coon song.

Moreover, it has always been my conviction that grand opera should be given by grand singers, amid grand surroundings. In our own case, it seemed preferable to give light opera with occasional grand opera effects than the reverse. This artistic opinion was corroborated by commercial box-office results. The comparison was tersely put by George, our advance agent, who gave his verdict on the financial outlook for "Carmen" in the following language of solemn admonition:

"Barney: 'Robin Hood', terrapin; 'Carmen,' fringe!" —the latter word referring to the frayed trousers of comedians who have to walk home on the railroad ties.

And yet Mr. De Koven has tried in vain to find a successor to "Robin Hood." "Rob Roy" might have done it, possibly, if it had been entrusted to the Bostonians first.

The "Red Feather" was to do the trick, "Happy Land" was to fill the bill, the "Student King" with its male chorus was a "sure pop" and the "Golden Butterfly" was to be a gilded winner, but

Mr. De Koven is *still trying.*

As the hand of memory weaves the blissful dreams of long ago I want to say that there was never an opera like "Robin Hood" (the only story of its kind extant) and there never will be. There never was a company like the Bostonians and there never will be, and when a new Sheriff, according to the *Seattle Times*, takes up the staff that has fallen from the hand of Henry Clay Barnabee, "the newcomer may make the part more actively comic and get more laughs out of it, but he will never get the artistic touch, the velvety, of quiet humor out of it that the old man did."

Chapter XXXV

TOURING IN SEMI-"GRAND"

MARIE STONE'S PARTING SONG.—SECOND INVASION OF NEW YORK.—A PROFESSIONAL MATINEE.—I BECOME A LAMB.—A GOLDEN DISCOVERY.—A WORD TO THE AMBITIOUS.

"*No other company of American singers ever has achieved such lasting success as did the Bostonians. For twelve years they toured the country, season after season, until they became a national institution.*"—The American History and Encyclopedia of Music.

MARIE STONE (Mrs. W. H. MacDonald) reached the zenith of her success and fame simultaneously with our scaling the heights of Grand Opera. But the hard race had exhausted her, and with a farewell testimonial performance in her native city of Worcester, Mass., she took regretful and regretted leave of the stage.

I shall never forget that night of June 9, 1891, when she rendered her parting song. A house crowded to the doors with friends, a stage lined and framed with flowers, and made to ring with the music and laughter of an admirable opera company, lavish testimonials of beautiful flowers and costly gifts, and withal, as a critic has said—"a splendid performance"—these were the salient features of that memorable occasion.

A souvenir program bore Miss Stone's portrait upon the front, and, on the back, was the following tribute:

"The inevitable but bitter brevity of an artistic career, such as has been so gloriously fulfilled by our friend and guest, is endurable to us only by virtue of our delightful memories of that brilliant career.

"We lose our charming friend 'Suzette,' and with her troop away a score or more of other bewitching sisters in mimicry and music, but as they kiss their hands to us in that good-bye which shall send them forever from our sight, we are consoled that in that last look they shall see our hearts aflame and our hands outstretched in welcome to their mistress, our loyal friend, the true wife and woman, Marie Stone."

It was a warm-hearted, enthusiastic and beautiful testimonial. The curtain rose on Oscar Weil's melodious "Suzette," with Miss Stone in the title role—a a character of her own creation—and fell on the artistic climax of the entertainment—the fourth act of "Il Trovatore."

After the singing had ceased and the company and a few invited friends had assembled on the stage, the genial comedian of the Bostonians rose and rendered the following entirely extempore but singularly felicitous speech:

"The curtain has descended upon the last act of your professional career. The public have made their last plaudits. It now only remains for us, your associates, to add their tribute. It is fitting that I, who have known you longest and best, should be their medium of communication. Therefore they deputed me today to purchase this beautiful gem.

Flawless itself, it is emblematical of your professional and private character. As we have seen tonight, you retire in the zenith of your power. Let me now repeat in public what I have often said in private: That you are the most versatile, accomplished and brilliant vocalist on the American stage."

And so Marie Stone left us, the recipient of a royal ovation.

The Bostonians moved for a second time upon New York, in full "battle" array. The place left vacant by Miss Stone was taken by Caroline Hamilton, until Camille D'Arville could join us.

The metropolitan press, chary at first in their praise of "Robin Hood," eventually loosened up, and the public was more than enthusiastic. Our professional matinee given October 20, 1891, at the Standard Theater was, as the New York *Commercial Advertiser* says, "one of the most agreeable affairs of the kind that ever took place in the city."

It was a discriminating, intelligent, watchful and appreciative assemblage. Joseph Jefferson, W. J. Florence, Marie Wainwright, Mrs. Dion Boucicault, Henry E. Dixey, the Kendalls, Mrs. Yeamans, the Drews, Marie Tempest, Laura Bellini, Lillian Russell and "Jack" Perugini occupied boxes, while all over the house were scattered other stage celebrities and among them Messrs. Louis James, Frank Losee, Marshall Wilder I remember were there and a host of others, too many to call by name. To quote a New York critic—"It is impossible to say which enjoyed the afternoon the

better—the people on the stage or those in the front of the footlights. It was play on both sides. The players in the body of the house were having a holiday—and such a holiday—and the players on the stage were furnishing the enjoyment, and enjoying it while they extended it with a heart in their labor of love."

The outcome, you ask? Well, we received an indorsement not often accorded a new piece of comparatively unknown authorship. With flying colors we went on our way rejoicing.

At this time, too, the male principals of our company were esteemed worthy of election to the famous and only Lambs Club, an organization which for originality, loyalty and mutual good-fellowship is, to my thinking, after nearly a quarter of a century's membership, absolutely unrivalled. In its memorable "Star Gambol" I made my first, last and only plunge into black-faced minstrelsy. My success as a tambourinist and end-man is not conspicuously recorded in the annals, perhaps; but there was "glory enough for us all."

The Bostonians waved the star-spangled banner of native art in their next three productions, which were: "The Knickerbockers," "The Ogallalas," and "The Maid of Plymouth," all of which were of the purest American brand as to book, lyrics, music, and interpretation. It was sixteen to one that we would win out, as we deserved; but our lesson was to be slowly and painfully learned, that if the American public really discriminated in favor of home-made art, which

was doubtful, they were not going to rave over it in its new-fangled light opera habiliments.

Though Miss D'Arville, in addition to her admirable Maid Marian, created a most attractive Katrina in "The Knickerbockers," and sang charmingly the soprano role in "The Ogallalas"; though Miss Waltzinger and Miss Diard furnished beauty and talent in alternate performances; though Miss Margaret Reid brought Paris Conservatoire training to the part of the prim Puritan Maid; though the comedian did his best alternately as a Governor, a Professor, and the genuine article of grim old Pilgrim; and though the entire augmented company gave their accustomed good account of themselves —still American art languished on its native heath. Though of the early settlers of Massachusetts it were said that—

> "Amid the storm they sang,
> And the stars heard, and the sea,
> And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
> With the anthem of the free."

the up-to-date New Yorkers didn't seem to care a "tinker's rap."

In "The Ogallalas," though, we thought we had a walk-over, that opera being the pioneer attempt to introduce on the stage the aboriginal proprietors of the soil, in the music of our mutual fatherland, minus whoops. We had the valuable assistance and encouragement of Lieutenant-General Nelson A. Miles, who had won his spurs as an Indian fighter, and who was familiar

with all sorts and conditions of the noble red man, his war-dance antics, musical eccentricities and facial landscape-painting. The general supplied us liberally with books, maps, and every sort of property and "palaphanalia," as Clara called it.

The consequence was our production of "The Ogallalas" was charged with "atmosphere" at a density of about one hundred pounds to the inch. When, as the bland old paleface Professor of Botany, I had my wig-warmed in a realistic scalping scene, the first-night audience broke into a chorus of blood-curdling yells; and authors, librettists, managers and principals were caught, bound, gagged, and dragged to the footlights, like victims to the stake.

All this, shortly, proved only too prophetic, for somehow "The Ogallalas" never drew paying audiences to their operatic pow-wows, and we were finally compelled to agree with the late General Sheridan that "the only good Indian is a dead Indian."

The successive seasons brought more changes in our ranks. Camille D'Arville and Tom Karl left with their laurels for other, though not happier, spheres of action; and Mr. Hoff decided that the life-insurance business would be a better risk for him than comic opera.

Our new recruits included Miss Eloise Morgan and Mr. Joseph Sheehan, both of whom came in for their respective shares of "Robin Hood" renown.

Victor Herbert joined us for his first operatic ven-

ture; and "Prince Ananias," despite its unprepossessing title, might have prevailed, had not its few grains of musical merit been overwhelmed in a bushel or more of libretto chaff. As it was, the experiment left us many pleasant recollections—notably of the personal success of that dainty Dresden-china comedienne, Miss Morgan, with whom I had rather a fetching duet and dance.

In fact, the music of "Prince Ananias" was so good that we took it as a running mate with our perennial winner, "Robin Hood," on another trip to California, via the sunny Southland. Here Helen Bertram came into the game, and, playing Maid Marian for her trump card, won the prima donna trick with ease and grace.

The immortal Clara, of our wardrobe department, continued to triumph in her Malapropian role. On one early morning start in Texas, as we were snuggling ourselves in the cold car to snatch an hour or two of ravel-knitting sleep, up pipes her high soprano voice with:

"Well, we're the h'early worms this morning, and *no* mistake!"

At lunch stations she would dart out of the car, and reappear with beaming face and a chicken-bone, exclaiming:

"Oh, I've 'ad such a nice physickee chicken!"

In 'Frisco, this time, we "struck pay dirt" in the discovery of Alice Nielsen. She was obscured in the

Tivoli company, but her fresh young voice, sympathetic face and vivacious personality could not long remain hidden, anywhere.

We were on the verge of producing Oscar Weil's musical fantasia, "In Mexico,"—which title was afterward changed to "A Wartime Wedding"—and had a first-rate part to offer our new singer. She made good, and so did the entire company, in this piece, which seemed to fit our organization like a glove, and yet proved an incorrigible misfit with regard to the patronizing public.

Miss Nielsen subsequently replaced Miss Bertram, and fulfilled her own and our expectations in a company which included William Philp, the tenor, specially imported from London; Hilda Clark and the future Mrs. Van Studdiford, sopranos; Jessie Bartlett Davis and Marcia Van Dresser, contraltos; Cowles and Merrill, bassos; MacDonald and Hanley, baritones; Frothingham, Fitzgerald, Harry Brown, and the inevitable Barnabee, comedians.

This ensemble, probably, registered the Bostonians' high-tide operatic mark.

Here would seem to be the proper place to tell you how the Company recruited its voices, and to emphasize in a general way the thing that I have so often reminded many an ambitious singer, viz.—that there are a number of requisites for a young man or woman who expects to attain success on the operatic stage.

I have told you that we discovered Miss Alice Nielsen

in California, and Eugene Cowles in Illinois. Another singer we found was Miss Grace Reals, a singer in a Toledo church. Next to Maconda, Miss Reals was the original Annabel for two or three seasons.

In almost every city in which the Bostonians appeared, we were called upon to help or advise some singers who thought that they had talents that would ensure them a successful stage career.

There was not one in a hundred of the voices we heard that could have been utilized outside of the chorus, and that part of the organization was readily filled. I always told the applicants, as gently as I could, after running over their voices (for it was almost cruel to shatter the hopes of a young man or woman whose music teacher, or friends, had led them to believe that they possessed more than ordinary talent) that they couldn't expect to make more than a living on the stage.

A person to make other than a bare living in stage work must have temperament; something that is not possessed by everyone; and most of all a strong personality. If a young lady wants to become a singer in opera she must have a good voice, a pretty or attractive face; a good form—not too tall or short; and then she must, in addition to these qualifications, be different from the rest.

A young man demands the same requirements. What can a tenor do if he is a short man, or a very tall one? He must be in good form, in every sense of

Barnabee as Izzet Pasha in "Fatinitza"

Barnabee as Sir Joseph Porter in "Pinafore"

Barnabee as the Major in "Rob Roy"

Barnabee as La Fontaine in "Ananias"

Barnabee as Ezra Stebbins in "In Mexico"

Barnabee as the Mayor of Perth in disguise in "Rob Roy"

Barnabee as the Sheriff of Nottingham in "Maid Marian

Barnabee as the Duke in "Fanchonette"

Barnabee as Mayor in "Rob Roy"

Sebastian Lang, as Caiaphas
Joseph Mayer as Prologus
Bertha Wolf as Magdalena

Anna Flunger as Maria
Anton Lang, as Christ
Hans Mayr

Thomas Rendl as Peter
Peter Rendl as John
Sebastian Bauer as Pilate

the term. He must combine intelligence with his musical talents.

Yes, dear friend, we did make a discovery once in a while. A voice was found whose owner had the required talent. It was like mining. You know a prospector will drudge along for many years searching for gold; he is sure he will find it some day, and if he keeps at it he usually uncovers a find that repays him for all his trouble. We kept trying voices; we knew they were somewhere, and that we would run across them some day—and we did.

In my opinion, the music teachers of this country are to blame for many of the blasted hopes of young people who are musically inclined. The average teacher of vocal music will tell a pupil that they have a great future; that they can sing in grand opera; that they have a brilliant career before them if they continue their musical studies. This appears to be the principal stock in trade of the average vocal instructor. The pupil will go on sometimes for years, with this dream keeping them up and at length they wake up; the illusion is dispelled, or they conclude that they are not appreciated or have not had the necessary opportunity.

I don't see why the music teacher cannot tell a pupil that they have vocal talent; that they can cultivate the voice and it will prove to be an accomplishment that will be a source of pleasure to themselves and their friends. I cannot see why the teachers find it

necessary to declare to the pupil that they are going to set the musical world on fire.

I meet, or hear of cases of this kind continually; where young ladies and gentlemen have pursued this rainbow with all the energy of youth and ambition; who have wasted the best years of their lives in studying music with the expectation of some day becoming famous in the musical world; who dream out a brilliant career that can never be realized. The music teacher takes the money of the pupil, and that is all the interest the instructor has in the matter.

The conditions are different in the old world. There they have schools where the "real thing" is taught; where performances are given, and the pupils who have talent for stage singing can demonstrate their talents and it does not take them long to decide as to their talents and fitness for the work; the public decides that for them, and they need no other verdict.

I should like to see societies in the various cities of this country formed for the purpose of giving operatic productions. That would bring out talent and would give entertainment for the members and their friends. It would prevent the music teachers from deceiving young people by a method that it seems to me is very dishonest.

Chapter XXXVI

THE OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY

"It cannot be that, after all,
The mighty conquests of the mind,
Our thoughts shall pass beyond recall
And leave no record here behind."

—Col. David B. Sickels.

IN a chapter devoted to my first stage appearance, in Jefferson Hall, Portsmouth, I referred, satirically, to the endeavor of actors to obtain the center of the stage at all times, and wrote that the same desire had even invaded the performances of the "Passion Play" at Oberammergau, and intimated that I might write about it later. The time has arrived, but, of course, it would be absurd to write simply of that peculiarity, without an account of the whole performance. And so, dear reader, this will be an attempt to write truthfully of that presentation, as I saw it in the year 1900.

Let me begin with an assertion that I do not believe *any human* being can portray the Savior. Since witnessing the play at Oberammergau, I am more than ever convinced of it. No being, other than divine, could ever represent that gentle, patient face, as it came to me to see it when reading the sacred narrative of His trials and sufferings. I have never observed,

except once, in statues or paintings, anything that could realize, to my mind, the personality of the Divine Being who gave voice to the Sermon on the Mount, and comfort to the sick and sorrowing.

All over the continent, at every corner of the road, I observed attempts at representation of the Divine figure and face, but they inspired anything but adoration.

At the entrance to the Cathedral at Antwerp, I noted a wonderful painting by Rubens, of a scene in the life of the Savior which is supreme in its life-like characteristics. In the Louvre, at Paris, I saw a face by a celebrated artist which has received the commendation and praise of thousands of people. And at the Paris Exposition, in 1878, there was a painting by a modern artist of the "Descent from the Cross" which came nearer realizing to my mind the form and features of divinity than any I had ever seen—but they all were unsatisfying and fell far short of portraying the individuality of the Man of Sorrows.

I am sure my beloved country never did a wiser thing than preventing attempted portrayals here. Let the peasants of Oberammergau have it all—all the credit, all the money and all the criticism, which seem to be inseparable from the presentation of its sacred play.

Perhaps I had better relate the circumstances that led up to my visit to Oberammergau, the little mountain village on the border between Bavaria and Tyrol.

In all our trips abroad wherever myself and wife found ourselves, for a length of time in a city, we always planned side trips to vary the experience. In the year 1900 we were in Paris. One morning we were invited to breakfast with a lady, an old acquaintance of ours, who had just returned from the scene of the Passion Play, and to hear some young students give account of themselves, musically. After an hour or so of the pleasures of the table, interspersed with vocal offerings, the lady began to talk about the Passion Play, and gave us, in her own language, an account of the presentation. She showed us photos and autographs of the players. The faces quite impressed me, and I said to my wife, "My dear, Oberammergau must be our side trip this year." Our friend requested that I sign my name with the impersonators of the sacred characters. I rather objected, asking her if it would be thought proper for me to align myself in such company, confessing at the same time that often the humorous intrudes itself upon me, in the most serious situations. "Never mind," she said, "you sign your name and write anything you like." I took the pen, wrote my name, and then these words, "Birds of a Feather Flock Together."

Next day, while going to the ticket office to procure my railroad passage and the assignment of the rooms in the village (the entire population, as there is no hotel, giving up their houses to accommodate the crowds), I met a gentleman from New York, who,

having just returned from the festival, directed me as to my itinerary. I related to him the circumstances of the day before and asked him if it did not seem sacrilegious for me to sign my name with the Oberammergaus. Said he, "Sacrilegious? Nothing! If you are there the day before, or after, a performance, call and see Mr. Lang (The Christus), buy his picture, and perhaps he will invite you to beer and a sandwich."

When we arrived at our destination, we were assigned to the residence and care (at $5 per) of a lady of high degree, a literary person and novelist, and a charming hostess, occupying a chateau with a mountain background. Her guests were of the half and a half order, American and European, so that, at the first dinner, it reminded us, at our end of the table, of a fish dinner when the principal dish was "tongues and sounds." That was my first joke, and it established my reputation at once. We were a jolly party, more like a lot of people at a World's Fair, than for the serious purpose of our journey.

We occupied the day before the ceremonies in visiting the abodes of all the characters who were to take part in the play, and were received most pleasantly and graciously. In each room were tables filled with photos of the characters, which we patronized liberally, paying twice as much as the prices at the stores. At Mr. Lang's we secured many photos, but the "beer and sandwich," as per my friend from New

York, was omitted. I was glad of it, for I could not imagine it.

We noticed, as we travelled about, that all the children of the boy persuasion in town wore long hair, and we were told that every parent hoped that their boy would, in time, take one of the sacred characters. We learned, too, that the simple players, when not rehearsing or performing, continue in their daily vocations. Anton Lang, for instance, is a potter by trade and his brother, Sebastian, who took the part of Caiaphas, the High Priest, in 1900, is an expert wood carver.

It rained hard all of the time we were making our calls, and after completing them, with pleasant chats with the participants, we repaired to the chateau to converse with our "countess."

In our preliminary chat before dinner, she let me in on the ground floor, so to speak, of a local happening which corroborated the "center of the stage" desire even among players supposed to be superior to worldly ambitions. It seemed that for the three previous decades, the part of "Christus" had been taken by the same person—Joseph Meyer. It had come to be felt that it was time for a younger man to be selected, and it was so ordered. It was a heart-breaking experience for the deposed, and it made him very ill He was on the verge of nervous collapse, when a happy thought suggested itself to the committee, which was, to assign to him the reading of the prologue, before the living

pictures, which had formerly been spoken by the choirmaster. This settled matters.*

Thus it was, that the next morning, after we had taken our seats, and the auditorium filled, that this towering personality appeared, followed by a procession of choristers, strode to the "center of the stage," faced the audience, and delivered, with strong and resonant voice, the prologue to the first tableaux. There were a number of these pictures, and full opportunity was given to the deposed one to do his share, to his heart's content.

Before the scene which followed, which was supposed to corroborate the prophecy of the picture, there was singing by solo voices, and it seemed to me that during the play, which lasted from 8 o'clock A. M. till 6 o'clock P. M., with two hours intermission at noon, each one of the choristers, thirty-four in number, sang a solo. There was one good tenor among them, but the remainder ranged from indifferent to bad.

The orchestra and the orchestral music were of a piece, *bad*, and, to use a common expression, "scratchy" —certainly not written or executed by the most competent German talent.

The tableaux were all quite effective, not more from their arrangement than for the large number of people

* In 1910 the committee had a similar experience. Thomas Bendl, who had played the part of Peter in 1900, was succeeded by a younger man. The blow almost crushed the venerable player, but the committee were aware of how inexpressibly hard it was for him to give up the role, voted him the part left vacant by his successor. Bendl, therefore, remained in the cast, playing the part of Simon of Bethany.—Editor.

concerned. It seemed to me, in some of them, there were none of the village people left at home.

In one tableaux, every one on the stage was in the attitude of rapt attention to something that was expected to appear, and to heighten the illusion, as they no doubt supposed, a carved wooden dog, in the same attitude, was placed down in front. In this place, I will not describe the effect upon me, except to write that I could not see anything but that dog.

In the scene in the Temple and the driving out of the money changers, I rather expected to see some confusion and irritation, but with the coming down to the front of two traders, each with a cage from which they released two pigeons that flew out over the opening between the stage and auditorium, there was no excitement whatever.

In the scene before Pilate's house with the crowd clamoring for him, I was struck with the wonderful precision of utterance of that number of voices. Of course, it is absurd to think of a mob of four or five hundred speaking with one voice. It would naturally be a babel of sounds, but the absolute precision with which they spoke the words of long paragraphs was something marvelous in the matter of practice.

The most impressive part of the whole presentation was the washing of the feet of the disciples by the Lord and Master, which was very much deepened and heightened by distant music. The whole scene was touching and tender in the extreme.

The scene of the Crucifixion (I could hardly look at, and cannot write about it) was so painful when Christus disappeared behind the curtain and the noise of hammering fell upon our ears. When the curtain was drawn aside and disclosed the figure suspended by clamps on the edges of the cross, I could not take more than one look. The cry "Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani" seemed too real, and when the soldier pierced with his spear the side of Christus, and red blood followed its withdrawal, I could not endure the medieval realism of the scene.

To conclude, there was not a real actor in the cast, all very amateurish, excepting Judas (Johann Zwink), who displayed dramatic ability. Perhaps it was better then, for any effort of elocution would have destroyed the simplicity of the recital. I hope I have not written one word, for I would not willingly, that would take away from any sincere auditor one iota of comfort in seeing the play. I have not followed it in its entirety—I could not. It was twelve years ago that I saw it, and as I made no notes, memory is liable to fault, but I have written it just as I remember having seen it, and my impression of it, pardonable or otherwise.

When we got back to the chateau after our strenuous day I learned the history of the play. It seems that about three hundred years ago a pestilential disease broke out in the valley. Only Oberammergau was spared. All roads leading to the little village were guarded day and night, but somehow or other, a native

who had been working in a nearby village managed to pass the guards. The result was that the family of the man were stricken with the disease and died. So rapidly did the plague spread that in some cases whole families passed away. Hardly a home was spared. Then it was that some went to the church, made their supplication and vowed that if God would hearken unto their prayers that they would present from time to time the story of Christ's last days. According to records their prayers were answered and the Passion Play was staged.

But in these days the play has changed! Possibly, the participants feel the same, but the spirit of commercialism, the "how much is there in it for me" spirit, has crept in to an extent, which has deprived it largely of the effect it would otherwise have had. The whole village has become a large hostelry (1,900 rooms and 3,500 beds, with prices ranging from thirty-seven cents to five dollars), the people, like the occupants of homes near summer resorts in this country, renting them at high prices, and the vending of photos and souvenirs, and that large amphitheater packed to the roof with a summer run of audiences, at $2.50 to $5.00 a seat—gives it an aspect very much at variance with the devotion of the earlier and pious peasants, who depicted the trials and sufferings of "Jesus Christ and Him Crucified" as an act of devotion *among themselves.*

After bidding our hostess a courteous and pleasant adieu, with many remembrances of her courtesy and

hospitality, we took the night train for Paris, sitting bolt upright the whole journey in company with a noisy and boisterous party of sightseers.

The next day, after our arrival there, we visited the catacombs, with its millions of bones arranged in every conceivable form, made an ascension in Gifford's balloon, in company with thirty-four other persons who were anxious to leave the world—temporarily, of course—and, finally, to reach the other extreme, took a novel trip into a mountain mine. But—never again!

As to Oberammergau and its drama, I hope no one will be deterred from going there in 1920 and seeing and learning for themselves, but I prefer the image I have formed in my own heart and mind of the Divine Being who said—

"I am the resurrection and the Life; whosoever believeth in Me though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."

Chapter XXXVII

"THE SERENADE" AND EVENING SHADOWS

A GENUINE COMIC OPERA.—BARNABEE A "RIP."—ULYSSES IN SHERWOOD FOREST.—LIST OF OPERAS.—THE BARNABEE TESTIMONIAL BENEFITS.—'TIL WE MEET AGAIN.

"*In these days of alleged comic opera companies, too often composed of shrill-toned prima donnas, kittenish tenors and acrobatic comedians, it is always a pleasure to welcome the Bostonians.*"—New York Herald.

WE were now searching diligently for another "Robin Hood," and illusions of such a find occasionally permeated our thought-cells. A number of authors and composers, besides the original pair, enthusiastically shouted "Eureka!" But the vast majority of people in the seats silently but none the less effectively responded: "Come off your perch!"

Nevertheless, we did strike it. It was "The Serenade." In this delightful creation Messrs. Herbert and Smith handed us out an artistic financial atonement for the four-flushing "Knickerbockers" and the false-throated "Prince Ananias," in what I regard as the best American contribution to genuine comic opera—as distinguished from musical comedy, which I consider "Robin Hood" to be—up to now revealed.

"The Serenade" furnished a spanking vehicle for the various talents of the company I have named

above. The public agreed with our estimate, this time, and we enjoyed five more "fat" years with the repertoire thus strengthened. The great Pacific Northwest—Portland (Oregon), Tacoma, and Seattle, were invaded, and our success there lured us on to Victoria and to Vancouver.

Previous to this, however, we had tempted Providence, Rhode Island, in a comic-operatic "Rip Van Winkle," written and composed by a Mr. Jules Jordan, of the city named. I was Rip. Though I shied at first, in a weak moment I consented to have a go at the part.

It lasted just long enough for me to have my photograph taken in a King Lear-ish make-up. Yet two sweetly cherished memories remain: my scenes with the children, and the tones of Jessie Bartlett Davis' voice as she sang "The Land of Nod."

But the critics soon put "Rip" to sleep for all time. One irrelevant scribe, to point a moral or adorn a tale, I don't know which, quoted the story of an epitaph intended to read, "Let her Rest in Peace," but which the tombstone sculptor, being cramped for room, abbreviated to:

"LET HER
R. I. P."

On this Western journey we had a sleeping car of our own, with two colored porters attached, whom we used to indulge alternately with free passes to the show. One of our programmes gave the following scenic summary:

Act I.—A Rocky Pass.

Act II.—Monastery and Convent of St. Ursula.

Act III.—Same as Act First.

The porter who got off to see this piece returned to the train before 10 o'clock. When questioned by his mate as to why he had left the theatre so early, he pointed to the programme and said:

"Well, I done saw de two acts, and den de programme says 'Act three same as de fust! Golly! I didn't want to see dat fust act all over again, so I come home."

With Helen Bertram's return to the fold, and Helena Fredericks, soprano, and William Broderick, basso, added to our numbers, we now acquired "Rob Roy," but he did not turn out a very "hot Scotch."

"Ulysses" came next. There Greek met Greek, and it was the tug of war, indeed. It was a funny episode—just funny enough for one, but not *two* funny, and an expensive joke to the partnership proprietors of an operatic outfit. We had ordered full sets of new scenery and props—Troy, Athens, a Fairy Grot, and a papier-mache horse twenty feet long and as many hands high, with a trap-door in his ribs for the comedian's hiding-place, entrance, and exit. But the train bringing all this elaborate investiture was somehow held up, and we played "Ulysses" the first night which also was very near the last—with "Robin Hood" scenery and costumes, showing the unwonted spectacle of Greek warriors clad in the Lincoln green

of medieval England, disporting themselves in the classic shades of Sherwood Forest!

Good-bye eighteen thousand plunks! Nay—

"Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to Manhattan we hurried;
Not a critic allowed a tear to gloat
O'er the storehouse where our Uly lay buried."

The redoubtable horse of Troy may still be seen on application at the cellar door of the Euclid Avenue Opera House, Cleveland.

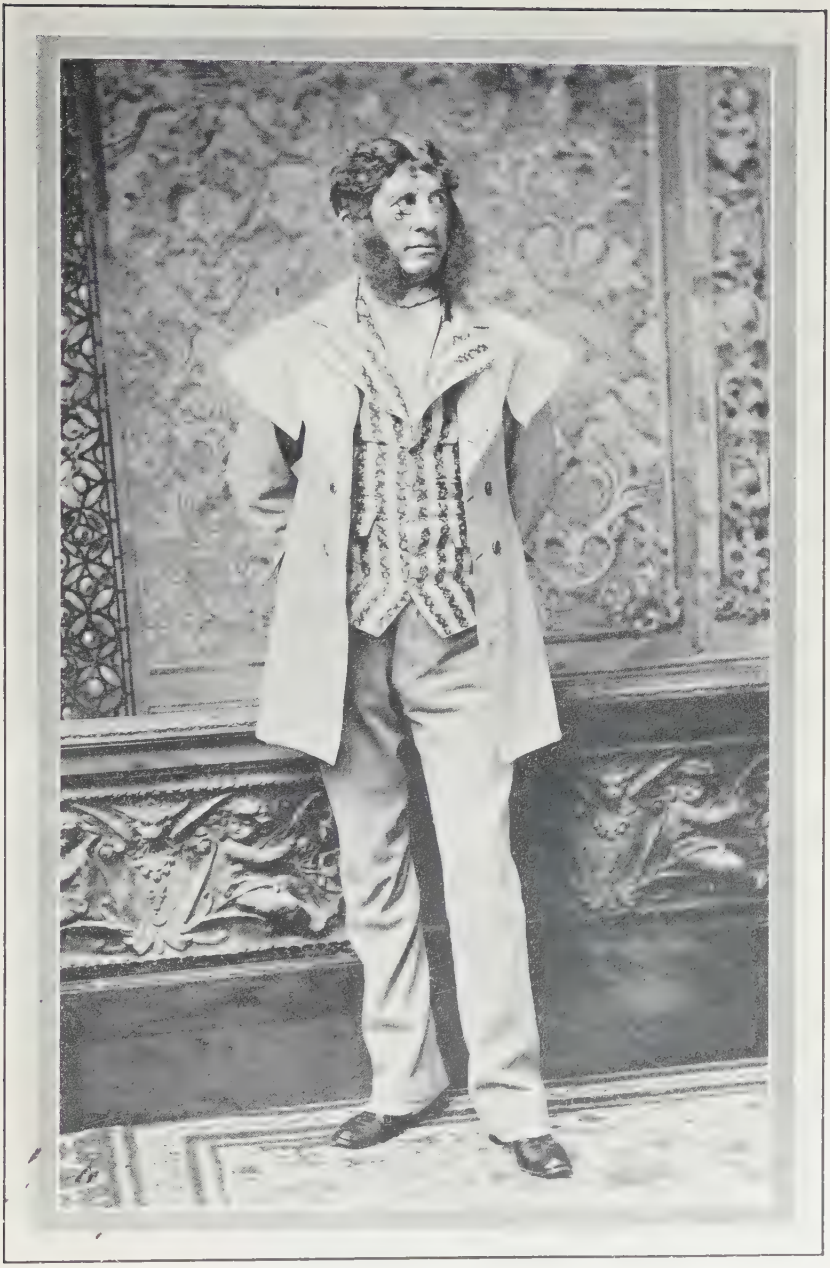
Our misfortunes never came singly, but were mostly either twins, triplets, or—as Clara would say—"quadrangles.'

It was at this juncture that Jessie Bartlett Davis, whose name and fame were indissolubly linked with those of the Bostonians, listened to the siren call of vaudeville, and left us.

And then we were caught with two more operatic "dead ones," "The Smugglers" and "The Vice-Roy." The latter justified the first syllable of its name, so far as the attributes of its leading character went. The music, by Victor Herbert, was worthy of his name. The interpreters were re-enforced by Grace Cameron, Marcia Van Dresser, John Dunsmuir, and Frank Rushworth. But—

Well, the storehouse now began to bulge with the debris of defunct works of art crowded into it.

Our Waterloo awaited us, not far off.



HENRY CLAY BARNABEE AS LORD ALLCOCK IN "FRA DIAVOLO

Upper left hand: Mr. and Mrs. Barnabee on their wedding day
Upper right hand: Mr. and Mrs. Barnabee somewhat later
Lower picture: Mr. and Mrs. Barnabee in 1890, on the road

We had been advised by our astute business managers that our next effort must be "a knock-out," or—

Well, it *was* a knock-out—only it knocked in the wrong direction.

We committed the egregious folly of trying to succeed a success, on the "continued-in-our-next" plan. In other words, we fondly hoped that the characters in "Robin Hood" would bear transplanting into the soil of a new plot and other surroundings.

The new environment was supplied and peopled with such rising artists as Grace Van Studdiford, Olive Moore, W. C. Weedon, Harold Gordon, Alice Judson and Allan Hinckley.

"Maid Marian" was the name of the new mistress of our destinies. She turned them sharply in the direction of disaster. But we made one more gallant sortie before the final surrender.

The celebration at the Academy of Music, New York City, of the twenty-fifth birthday of the Bostonians, to which our illustrious godfather, Henry Watterson, and our time-honored friend, "Joe" Jefferson, lent the eclat of their assistance, preceded our setting out on what proved to be our farewell tour. In this forlorn hope, besides our battle-scarred veterans, Agnes Brown, Gertrude Zimmer, Kate Condon and Douglas Ruthven joined.

It was a most disastrous theatrical year.

We should have listened to warnings, and have "come in" early to avoid the crash. But with the in-

fatuation of despair, we struggled on, through one-night stands, through a financial blow occasioned by the Iroquois Theater holocaust in Chicago, through the wearing and costly journey to the far Pacific coast, once more.

Here we made one last attempt to stem the tidal wave of calamity, with one more offering to the elements. "The Queen of Laughter" it was called.

At Atlantic City, New Jersey, by the sad sea waves, on Young's Pier, with a ten-cent audience in the rear looking coldly on, the Queen of Laughter smiled her last, and the proud Bostonians went down, with the colors of their long and valiant career still flying.

Yea, the end had come! The last ripple of applause had been washed up by the sea—the last chord of music had sounded—the last note sung—the last curtain drawn—the last light out—the last exit at the back of the gilded sphere—

Words are useless, vain! History and memory must comfort the mourner as well as serve the preacher. That's all that's left.

The Bostonians gave the United States the most successful school for operatic study that this country has ever had, and from its ranks graduated an astonishing number of well-known singers. No other organization has done more, if as much, toward assisting American writers or opera.

During the years dating from the founding of the company to its farewell tour, we offered the American

public many operas, including a number of masterpieces considered to be the best and highest achievements in romantic light opera.

Today, I thoroughly believe musical comedy to be the entertainment of the future. It has all the beauties of the play and the music besides. In my opinion the story should be more prominent than the music. The latter ought to be written for the libretto rather than vice versa. In my time I have seen musical comedy rise to pre-eminence on the stage, and I am convinced it will more than hold its own in years to come.

In looking over the long list of operas in which I have played many parts, I cannot help but think that throughout my operatic career, I strove to teach my fellow-beings what Shakespeare has penned in verse that—

> "To frame the mind to mirth and merriment,
> Bars a thousand harms and lengthens life."

But, dear reader, even though every laugh pulls a nail out of our coffins, my theory is that an entertainment must appeal to more than one human sentiment to be permanently popular. Even though my talent lay in mimicry and comic specialties, if I were to play a character exactly to my liking, it would be a role that would often move an audience to merriment, but would have a dominating current of pathos that would cause laughter to cease now and then and bring tears to the eyes of the people.

There is something in our human nature that makes

the dividing line very narrow between tears and laughter, which makes a strong sense of humor and a sympathetic appreciation of pathos almost twin characteristics in some men, and I think that this enters very largely into the compositions of most comedians.

Regarding music, I might add to what I have already written in this volume that I firmly believe it to be the stone bulwark that defends mercy, peace, charity and humanity.

For the sake of preservation and for a place in "operatic reviews," I herewith spread upon this tablet of memories the names of the operas and the list of characters I impersonated while a member of that sterling company—the famous Bostonians:

Name	*Musical Composer*	*Barnabee's Role*
The Poachers	Jacques Offenbach	Marcasson, a mule driver
Dorothy	Alfred Cellier	Lurcher, an eccentric sheriff
Don Pasquale	Gaetano Donizetti	Don Pasquale, an antiquated bachelor
Don Quixote	Reginald De Koven	Don Quixote
Mignon	Ambroise Thomas	
Pygmalion and Galatea	Von Suppe & Thomas	Chrysos, patron of the arts
Robin Hood	Reginald De Koven	Sheriff of Nottingham
The Knickerbockers	Reginald De Koven	The Governor
The Ogalallas	Henry Waller	Professor Andover
Prince Ananias	Victor Herbert	La Fontaine, a strolling impresario
In Mexico, or A War Time Wedding	Oscar Weil	Ezra Stebbins, a droll Yankee
The Serenade	Victor Herbert	Duke of Santa Cruz
Rip Van Winkle	Jules Jordan	Rip Van Winkle
Maid Marian	Reginald De Koven	Sheriff of Nottingham
Rob Roy	Reginald De Koven	Mayor of Perth
Vice Roy	Victor Herbert	Vice Roy
The Smugglers	Anon.	Don Brandieu
Maid of Plymouth	G. Thorne	The Elder
Queen of Laughter	Anon.	The King

After twelve years of touring the country, the curtain had descended on the Bostonians for the last time. It was a sad finale, but not quite the finish of Barnabee.

There were debts to be wiped out, and a large-salaried vaudeville offer came opportunely. Just as the skies were clearing again, in one fell moment, not thirty minutes after singing and illustrating the serviceable old "Cork Leg," the ligaments of my own knee suddenly snapped, and *that* engagement terminated.

I spent many long months on a stretcher, and upon my partial recovery, I made a brief try-out in an ephemeral playlet which had "Clover" for its central idea. But those concerned did not find themselves "in clover," materially speaking, to any appreciable extent.

Then came what I may call the crowning of my career, in the two testimonial benefits given in my honor, in New York and Boston. The first was carried to gratifying success by my comrades of the Lambs' Club; the second, by old-time friends of my dear adopted city.

Perhaps, dear reader, the following lines from the New York *Herald* are able to tell you more than my feeble pen could of what really took place on the afternoon of December 11, 1906, when the Lambs, loosed from their fold, skipped over on old Broadway and made merry for Mrs. MacDonald and the Lamb that couldn't gambol.

"One of the largest audiences ever crowded into the Broadway Theater attended the testimonial performance given yesterday afternoon, under the auspices of the Lambs' Club, for Mr. Henry Clay Barnabee and Mrs. William H. MacDonald, former members of the Bostonians. The total receipts were more than $22,000, which did not include the cancellation of notes given by Mr. Barnabee to friends for $10,000, which were destroyed in favor of the actor when it became known that he was in financial difficulties. One of these notes was given to the late Senator M. A. Hanna, and when he died it was left to his widow.

"When Mrs. Hanna learned that Mr. Barnabee was going to have a benefit she sent word to the men in charge of the testimonial that she had destroyed the note of the actor, as did two other persons, who held Mr. Barnabee's notes for $5,000. These notes were secured by life insurance held by the aged actor, and by their holders giving them up, they as much as presented Mr. Barnabee with $10,000.

"Mr. Barnabee himself appeared upon the stage and read an elegant and touching appreciation in behalf of himself and Mrs. MacDonald of the kindness of all who had assisted in the benefit. At the end the aged actor and singer broke down and wept.

"There were many interesting features of the benefit held yesterday afternoon. Mrs. E. L. Fernandez, who is always on hand when there is any charity work for the people of the stage to be done, had charge of the young actresses who sold programs, and raised more than $800. A program containing the autographs of all those who appeared at the benefit was auctioned off by Mr. Raymond Hitchcock and bought by Mr. George Kessler for $250.

"Every one of those who volunteered to appear at the benefit did so, which in itself was a remarkable feature.

"It would take much space to tell all about the performance. Those who took part included practially all of the stars, leading men and women, and many others of the stage celebrities now appearing in Broadway. Mr. Victor Herbert and his orchestra played a fantasie from 'The Serenade' as an overture, which was followed by an address by Mrs. Fiske and written by Mr. Clay M. Greene, which paid a tribute to Mr. Barnabee.

"Others on the program, which began at one o'clock and lasted until after six o'clock, included Mr. Lew Fields and company, in the duel scene from 'About Town'; Miss Blanche Ring, in some songs; Mr. Henry Miller and Miss Margaret Anglin, in the first act of 'The Great Divide'; Miss May Irwin, in a song; Miss Eleanor Robson and company, in a one-act play entitled 'A Tenement Tragedy,' and Miss Rose Stahl and company, in second act of 'The Chorus Lady'; Miss Lillian Russell, accompanied by her daughter, Miss Dorothy, at the piano in two songs; Miss Hattie Williams, in a selection from 'The Little Cherub,' supported by a chorus made up of well-known actors, including Messrs. Fritz Williams, Edmund Breese, Ernest Lambart, Edward Holland and W. L. Abingdon; Miss Louise Dresser in a song entitled 'My Gal Sal'; Mr. William Gillette, Miss Marie Doro and Miss Lucille La Verne, in the supper scene from 'Clarice,' and Mr. Henry Clay Barnabee and all of the principal comedians now appearing in Broadway in the tinkers' chorus from 'Robin Hood.'

"Others who helped to make the benefit the big success it was were Messrs. John Drew, Kyrle Bellew, Forbes Robertson, Henry Leoni, Miss Anna Held and Mlle. Dazie."

I am glad to be able to give here the oratorical effort which after an afternoon of ovation my faltering tongue was able to articulate:

"The clock is striking and the hour is late; I must not detain you but for a moment. If I had the tongues of men and of angels and could sufficiently command myself, it would be impossible for me to give adequate expression to the emotions that throng upon me in the presence of this imposing and overwhelming demonstration coming to me in my young old age, and embodying that which should accompany old age—love, honor, obedience, troops of friends, and to this dear woman, the artist associate and loved companion of my professional career, remembering and lamenting as we do him who has gone. To have lived to see this day which, while memory holds its seat, will be the day of days, is worth all the struggles and troubles we have passed, and to have deserved this tribute fills our very souls with joy unspeakable. We mingle in our thanksgiving the Lambs' Club, whose name is the very synonym of loving friendship; the energetic and earnest committee to whom this enterprise, from its inception to this glorious conclusion, has been a labor of love; my comrades and friends, the ladies and gentlemen of this noble and loved profession, to whom the call of the needy and deserving has always been the open sesame to their hearts and hands, and who have joined to make this occasion memorable; these gentlemen here, whose faces are familiar, and their beloved and inspiring leader; the ladies and their director who have been distributing the records of this occasion and the flowers that bloom for all; the good people in the cities of this great country, 'from the center all 'round to the sea,' whose memory of us in the days of our pilgrimages is evidenced now in golden friendship; and last, but by no means least, this glorious assemblage of New York's best and loveliest, who have poured into our laps their bounteous tributes of good will. Mere words are nothing. To all of you we can only say that if it is more blessed to give than to receive,

you have quaffed abundantly of the waters of joy, and if, as one of the great masters of speech has said, 'Gratitude is nearest heaven,' then we are listening to the celestial music. To each and all we thank you from our hearts, and, in the language of Tiny Tim, 'God bless us, every one.' "

The Boston Benefit, too, was an illuminating event of contemporaneous stage history. A host of artists paid me a generous tribute, for which any man might be grateful and proud to the end of his days. Mayor Fitzgerald alluded in an eloquent and touching address to the fact that the splendid organization which had been my pride had borne the name of the fair city of Boston with honor and renown.

It was a heartwarming occasion. Pretty actresses disposed of flowers and programs and every performer in the city had been willing and eager to help in the benefit. To quote the Boston *Globe*: "Surely no man in the profession in Boston ever got a more convincing testimony than Mr. Barnabee of the regard in which he was held."

The Boston Theatre was crowded. The box-office showed that there wasn't an empty seat; many of them, especially the boxes, had been sold, turned in and sold again. Standing room was at a premium. Groups stood patiently hour after hour, only sinking for brief rests on the lounges of the lobby while the curtain was down. The lobby itself looked, as someone has remarked, "like opera night with two Carusos singing."

After the address by the chief executive of the city I tried to extend my humble thanks to that vast audience. But mere words, my friends, could not fully express what was in my inner self. Far from it!

However feeble it may seem to you, in recognition of all that had been showered upon me by loving friends, I am willing to put my address on record here. In reading it, I ask you to remember this: that whatever may seem lacking in my feeble response is sealed up in my heart and memory—they are the vaults in which cherished remembrances and love hold sway and will continue to do so long after my voice and this book have passed away.

"Fifty-two and a half years ago, an absolutely unknown quantity, I sat in these seats and saw one of the first performances ever given beneath this dome. Twenty-eight years ago, after a varied career, always resisting the many calls to adopt the stage as a profession, I came over the side of the good ship Pinafore, then lying at anchor in this Boston harbor, and made my first bid for comic opera popularity.

"By a pleasant coincidence, the voice of the gentleman now manager of this theater and whose graceful courtesy donates its use today, was the first, in the words of Sir Joseph and Hebe, 'ready to call me to a stage life,' which I hope you may think has been moderately successful. And by a similar coincidence, this gentleman sitting here (Mr. Lothian) was the one who in my trepidation kept me from getting mixed in my lines.

"This afternoon, after a career of over fifty years, and at a period of life to which I could not reasonably have expected to arrive, and at a moment of personal pride to which my

fondest hopes could not have looked forward, I am here the recipient of this splendid ovation, on both sides of the curtain, and find myself unable to adequately voice my gratitude.

"To the ladies and gentlemen of the committees who have assiduously devoted themselves to this demonstration of good will; to the gentlemen of the press, who have united with enthusiasm to enhance the interest and profit of the compliment;

"To the good friends who have so generously contributed to my comfort and content for the remainder of my life;

"And to you who have made this occasion an overflow of kindness; the array of artists from every sphere of public approval who have come to honor me and entertain you, among them a Boston girl who is doing so for the second time;

"To the musicians and musical directors, the stage directors and their assistants, and to all who have aided in making this a grand success;

"Last to mention, but first in my affection, that splendid club, Boston's pride and mine, old members and new, who have come here to make this the proudest and happiest moment in my musical career—

"To each and all I give all I have, my love and deepest gratitude. Every name will be enshrined in memory. May God bless you all."

And now, in bringing to a close the imperfect account of these ramblings, I desire to tender my heartfelt thanks to you who have followed me with such patience as may be. There must be many sins of omission as well as of commission, for all of which I am sorry. Of this humble history, I can only say, with Touchstone:

"'Tis a poor thing, but mine own."

Whether or not I shall ever return to public life is a matter of conjecture. But of this I am sure—that whatever betide, somewhere, sometime, somehow, we shall all meet again.

And here ends "Barnabee's Itinerarium," in pursuit of the

Chaplet of Fame

GOOD-NIGHT

Chapter XXXVIII

FRIENDLY MEMORIES

"Friendship is the shadow of the evening, which strengthens with the setting sun of life."—La Fontaine.

DURING the making of this volume, the editor has received many letters from friends of the "Grand Old Man" inquiring as to when these reminiscences and reflections would be off the press. Aside from this general note of inquiry, each letter has contained some glowing tribute, an added line, as it were, bespeaking the relation of the wielder of the pen to the venerable comedian and singer.

It has been no small pleasure to receive such rare and interesting letters, and, as their contents are very fragrant, the editor has gathered them together and pinned them here as a sumptuous offering from a few of those who have known Mr. Barnabee best—either as a friend, a fellow, or an adopted father.

In extending this appreciation to Mr. Barnabee, the editor joins others in remarking that there never was a rose without a thorn. Fragrant as the pages are with the perfume of love and success, still they are wet with the dews of regret and sympathy.

The contributors from near and far join in affection's tribute of sympathy at the demise of "The

Bostonians" and the retirement of its head and the stellar lights, long brilliant about him, from the stage as Bostonians. To that organization more than any other, America is indebted for delightful and inspiring entertainments of the brightest, most cultured and purest school of opera. It was an itinerant conservatory—clean in thought, high toned in character, artistic in its work.

Is it any wonder that the music-loving public laments the death of such an organization and sympathizes with the one who was its prime favorite for years?

Truly "The Bostonians" are no more, but the lights, the plaudits, the flowers and the excitement for Henry Clay Barnabee did not permit him to say "Farewell!" Today, as in days of yore, every bouquet, every criticism, and every merry tune adds new lustre to his eagle eye and helps him to tighten his grip upon his staff. The memory of the masterpieces in which he took such a prominent part still carries his loving heart superior to the inroads and worries of age and supports his claim to a niche in the hall of immortality.

With the rainbows of Hope and Promise hovering over him and with sweet pansies and forget-me-nots offered by loving friends, he closes his book and declares, as did the prophets of old, that this life, let it be long or short, is but the prefatory chapter of a life which is yet to be lived, and which is never to end—the initial foreword of an eternal biography.

G. L. V.

FLOWERS FROM THE WAYSIDE

Tribute from Will J. Davis, the prominent theatrical manager and husband of the late Jessie Bartlett Davis:

November 22, 1911.

Dear Mr. Varney:

The most impressive characteristic of my old friend, Henry Clay Barnabee, was his unlimited generosity, and it was not always wisely displayed. Any hard-luck story, particularly from one of his own profession, would surely get a quick and usually a generous response from Barnabee. And in due course of time the habitual hard luck actor came to know that Barnabee was easy. Everybody knew this much better than he did himself. I first learned this side of his nature when I took the Bostonians on their maiden trip to California in the summer of 1889. I noticed that anyone in the company in real or supposed need of money went to Barnabee. In after years I played the company many engagements in Chicago, and then it came under my notice that not only members of his own company, but of almost every company playing contemporary engagements, from the manager down to the humblest members, sought for Mr. Barnabee—and never in vain. I have known him to give hundreds of dollars to help managers who were unable to get out of the city except through his aid. And often to managers who couldn't touch me for one hundredth part of the money he loaned. Hard luck appealed to him, and he never seemed to stop and ascertain whether it was an original or habitual appeal.

I have felt, since his retirement from active work on the stage that if he only got back the money he had loaned to his fellow-players, he would be independent financially. And in all this his good wife was with him. Her heart was big and her sympathy great.

It is also my pleasure to pay tribute to him as a friend and an artist. Original, quaint and of a class all alone by himself, the stage of America will never have another Barnabee. I have enjoyed his stage work, enjoyed his social worth, admired his big heart and will ever enjoy the many pleasant recollections his life has brought into mine. That he may live to a ripe and lovable old age, and acquire new friends every week of his remaining years is the wish of

WILL J. DAVIS.

From Elbert Hubbard, noted author and lecturer:

The Boston Ideal Opera Company was playing in Buffalo and Henry Clay Barnabee and half a dozen of his players took a run out to East Aurora. They were shown through the shop by one of the girls whose work it is to receive visitors. A young woman of the company sat down at one of the pianos and played. I chanced to be near and asked Mr. Barnabee if he would not sing, and graciously he answered, "Fra Elbertus, I'll do anything that you say." I gave the signal that all the workers should quit their tasks and meet at the chapel. In five minutes we had an audience of three hundred—men in blouses and overalls, girls in big aprons—a very jolly, kindly, receptive company. Mr. Barnabee was at his best—I never saw him so funny. He sang, danced, recited, and told stories for forty minutes. The Roycrofters were, of course, delighted. One girl whispered to me as she went out, "I wonder what great sorrow is gnawing at Barnabee's heart that he is so wondrous gay!"

From Frank Austin Carle, journalist:

As one of the public I have known Henry Clay Barnabee all my mature life, beginning with some church choir concert in my undergraduate days. He has been my valued personal friend for near thirty years, and I met him continually from the Atlantic to the Pacific through all the brilliant career of the Boston Ideals and the Bostonians, from the time of "Pinafore" to that of "Robin Hood."

Nothing in his life sticks in my mind like the peculiar and endearing relation between him and his public, which for near a generation was the whole American people. No mere artistry could command this; no power of entertainment could sustain it. Above and beyond his delightful comedy, his unerring appeal to dramatic sensibility, rose the pure human quality of the man, to which everything human in his audiences responded. I know of nothing like this in the history of the stage. He reversed the primary rule of the theater. If he had "lost himself in his part," the public would have missed what it loved with laughter, and cherished beyond the finest interpretation of the greatest part.

He was the joy of millions who sat in the theater as one sits by the fireside of a friend, loved, not for his rare wit and charm, but for the rarer human self. For these he never has retired and can never die, while memory holds her seat.

F. A. CARLE.

A quaint recollection by Louis C. Elson, noted author and lecturer:

Boston, April 13, 1911.

GEORGE LEON VARNEY, ESQ.:

Dear Sir,—I have a quaint recollection of Henry C. Barnabee in connection with a singular misprint. It occurred in the *Boston Advertiser* many years ago, and was a strange

blending of two different (widely different) items of news. It began with an inquest and ended with a reception to the Rev. Dr. Savage. The item in question ran as follows:

"An inquest was held yesterday upon the body of the man killed by the train at Knownothing Crossing the day before. The first witness was the engineer of the train, who testified that he saw the man on the track and blew the whistle to attract his attention. The man looked up in a dazed condition, but did not stir from the rails. The engine struck him, killing him instantly.

"Mr. Barnabee added to the enjoyment of the occasion by singing several comic songs."

By an odd coincidence I was telling this story at a dinner of the Apollo Club of Boston some time ago, when just as I had ended and the laughter was going on, Mr. Barnabee himself entered. Of course there was renewed laughter, and when Mr. Barnabee was told of the case he said, "I have carried that clipping for years."

LOUIS C. ELSON.

The following glowing tribute is from the pen of Robert Grau, author of "The Stage in the Twentieth Century" and other volumes:

In the forty years wherein I have been identified with the field of the theater, I have, of course, come in contact with nearly all of the great figures of the stage—while my association with my deceased brother Maurice gave me an introduction to practically all of the world's greatest celebrities in Grand Opera but among them all I can't recall one who impressed me more than did that Grand Old Man of light opera, Henry Clay Barnabee.

I knew Barnabee, too, away back in a period of the theater far less propitious than that we are now enjoying. In the early 70's the dignity and rectitude now character-

izing the amusement field was sadly lacking, but Barnabee even in those precarious days stood out as artist and man with distinction. In those days this dear old soul was presenting an entertainment entitled "A Night with Barnabee." Oh, ye players of modern times: would that it could be in your province to witness the exquisite art and superb method with which Barnabee invested his stage work four decades ago. He gave practically the entire entertainment himself, and the versatility of the man was simply amazingly inexhaustible.

Barnabee was regarded all over the country in this primitive period in a manner quite difficult for me to describe. He drew people to the theater whose presence there attracted attention, and it was this phase of his popularity that induced his engagement with the famous Boston Ideal Opera Company. Barnabee was the great compelling attraction of this grand organization as long as its unexampled career endured, and when this company years later became the Bostonians, "the Grand Old Man" remained its most potent figure.

Barnabee was wholly self-sacrificing throughout his career. Of business he knew absolutely nothing, and this was a status which became him truly, for at all times he was the most lovable of men, the most charitable and the most modest.

These traits never were so evident as when, seven years ago, adversity had begun to hover about him, not that he was in want, but the prosperity of the Bostonians had ceased. I was at this time securing what are known as headliners for vaudeville, and my respect for this great figure of the stage was such that I did not seek to bring him into vaudeville until it became a moral certainty that he would be enticed into the fold by some one who might not guide him in the manner I felt was due him. So negotiations between us were in order.

In all my career in vaudeville where I placed perhaps ninety per cent of the greatest attractions during a period of ten years, Barnabee was the only star whom it was possible for me to secure without bidding or bargaining, and had I chosen to do so, I would have been enabled to sign him for much less than the $1,100 a week actually paid to him. Moreover, Barnabee's artistic traits stood out here, for when I told him he could get the same weekly sum for a monologue, his modesty and a sense of obligation to some of his old-time colleagues decided him to use a little company and present a little operetta—and let me say it emphatically, this was by far the best and most elevating attraction the vaudeville stage had had up to that day. But, alas, poor Barnabee with the prospect of years of golden prosperity in the new field was forced to quit. Misfortune such as has seemed to follow him in his later years came in the shape of the St. Louis accident, necessitating, in the second week of his golden era, the cancellation of his entire tour. I do not know what compensation the "Grand Old Man" got from the express company, but I have heard it was very inadequate—whereas had he called on me, I am sure I could have proven great damages—but it would be just like Barnabee to avoid me.

The last time I saw him was in a New York hotel two years ago, looking the youngest old man on earth. May he live to be one hundred—and if there is one man the stage can look up to and honor, it is the Grand Old Man of whom I write.

ROBERT GRAU.

From Manager Ira C. Stockbridge of Portland:

"Whenever the Bostonians came here, Barnabee never failed to visit me at the earliest opportunity. He was one

of the finest men that I ever met, a very prince of good fellows, and withal a perfect gentleman. He always had a good story or joke to relate; he was always in a happy frame of mind. Barnabee had a great many friends in this city, and on his visits here he received many warm personal attentions. In the summer months he, together with some of the other principals of the company, spent some time at Bridgton fishing for trout. Barnabee was an enthusiastic angler, and came each season to enjoy the sport.

Jefferson De Angelis, comedian and singer, says, among other things:

I have known Mr. Barnabee for many years, and have always found him a charming gentleman, loyal to his friends and generous to a fault. His acts of kindness were many, of which little was known even by his closest friends. My most intimate association with him was during the tour of the All Star Gambol of the Lambs, and it gave as much amusement to witness his endeavor to be a genuine minstrel. He had never blackened up before, and consequently had great difficulty in washing the burnt cork from his face and hands. He would invariably appear with a large white patch either on the back of his neck, his ears, or around his eyes, when it should have been all black, and when he "washed up," as we say in minstrel parlance, he would have black spots showing. We gave two performances a day, and when we finished the tour I really think that my old friend Barnabee had so much burnt cork all over his body that it must have taken a week to get it all off. I well remember some of his performances in the old Boston Ideal Company and enjoyed them very much. His Pasha in "Fatinitza" was excellent. His success in "Robin Hood" is too well known even by the present generation for me

to comment on. It is to be regretted that he has retired from the theatrical profession.

Yours truly,
JEFFERSON De ANGELIS.

A few lines from Thomas R. Proctor, who has known Mr. Barnabee for years:

My dear Mr. Varney:

Your letter of the 18th should have had earlier attention, but I have been exceedingly busy, as I am sailing for Europe on the "Mauretania" August 2d, and shall not get back until about the middle of September. I hesitate to say anything about my old friend Barnabee because our friendship goes back so many years and I do not believe that anything I might say would interest others, but I have thought of two or three things which you might use, but I think they had better be carefully edited and submitted to Mr. Barnabee, and if he wishes to add anything I should certainly have no objection. I remember very well as a boy in 1857 and 1858 in Boston there was a society, which I assume is now extinct, called the Mercantile Library Association. It was supported largely by the merchants of Boston for the benefit of their employees. They had entertainments during the winter season such as recitations and small plays. Barnabee was always the star and I remember him in "Box and Cox" and other light comedies. He was not only a good actor, but a fine singer. However, I do not know that I had the honor of his acquaintance at that time. I became the proprietor of Baggs Hotel December, 1869, and very soon after Barnabee appeared at our old Mechanics Hall for the first time. To my surprise there was a very small audience, but a very appreciative one. He was called before the curtain and made a very witty speech. Among

other things I remember he said that it was his first appearance in this city, but he would like to ask some of the prominent business men present about how much real estate he could probably invest in on the proceeds of the entertainment. The next time he appeared in our new opera house before the Mechanics' Association, and the place was crowded. I do not believe that Barnabee ever appeared before a poor audience after that, and he has been here many times. His usual salutation when he arrived was, "Friend of my youth, how are you?" He was always my personal guest, and it was a great pleasure and privilege to entertain him. In 1875 I became proprietor of the Spring House, Richfield Springs, and Barnabee was good enough to come there on several occasions at considerable inconvenience to himself, but always to the very great satisfaction of our guests. He always had a large audience for two reasons. The entertainment was extremely interesting, and there was no charge or collection. I learned early in my show business that that was the way to secure a good audience. The Rev. Dr. Lothrop of Boston was a regular visitor and a great admirer of Barnabee, whom he knew and had heard many times in Boston. He was always convulsed in laughter whenever Barnabee sang any of his old witty songs such as the "Cork Leg," and I remember on one occasion that the singer said to him: "My young friend, there is no cause for suppressed laughter," and the old man was shaking his sides, his face almost purple and stamping the floor with his cane.

The last two visits he stayed at my private house and seemed to enjoy it very much. We certainly did. It was with difficulty that we pulled him away from the open fire in time to keep his engagement at the theater. I feel in the hurry of departure that I can't say more to you. I can't now recall any actor or artist who has given so much pleasure

to people as he, and I am sorry that he has not been better rewarded.

THOMAS R. PROCTOR.

"My Twig of Sweet Rosemary to Henry C. Barnabee" is the ribbon attached to the following tribute from Mrs. George D. Morgan (nee Eloise Morgan of "The Bostonians"):

The sublime mantle of comedy never fitted anyone more perfectly than Mr. Barnabee. The strong foundation for his operatic career was based upon an unusually vigorous intellect of wide horizons, innate refinement and the keenest sense of humor. Upon this he builded the subtle artistry, the towering character studies that placed him pre-eminent among American operatic comedians.

His comedy was effortless—*sans* contortions, acrobatics, or hysterics. Never shall I forget the manner of his entrance as the Sheriff of Nottingham in "Robin Hood." It had an ingratiating, indolent charm that gripped you and with the enfoldment of the character you felt that sense of completeness and satisfaction that is only inspired by a perfect piece of art.

Sargent's Prophets afford me no keener pleasure than my mental pictures of the various characters in which I saw Mr. Barnabee appear. They are ever a source of delight; particularly so is the Stage Manager role in "Prince Ananias," where we danced a few fantastic steps together. The ease with which he mastered those steps and tripped them as gaily as any youngster, although he was then at the age of sixty-one, was ever to me a source of wonderment and cup of brimming joy.

Among my most highly prized possessions I have two prettily painted dessert plates presented to Mr. Morgan and me

one Christmas before Mrs. Barnabee's death. I have them in a box frame with the card of loving sentiment which accompanied, as written by Mr. Barnabee: "They are reminiscent of our several homes, and have graced our table many a time and often." What memories of enjoyable hospitality these awaken of both gifted host and guests.

On my memory tablets of the Bostonians one thing stands forth as a beautiful cameo—Mrs. Barnabee's gentle, loving care of her husband. No one little chick ever had more brooding care than he from her. Her beautiful, tender eyes ever rested upon him, portraying a volume of mute adoration. She was always with him in the theater, caring for his slightest wish and ever ready with his shawl when he made his exits. Who knows how many loving prayers she breathed over him as she gently placed it around his shoulders?

Of Mr. Barnabee's great appreciation of his wife, no words of mine could adequately picture. His own beautiful tribute to her in his "Memoirs" is the clarion note of his life.

In the wreath of friendships which my heart holds, there is no sweeter memory than that of Henry and Clara Barnabee.

ELOISE MORGAN.

Miss Alice Nielsen, formerly of "The Bostonians," now of grand opera fame and considered by some to be America's greatest lyric soprano, dips her pen in the well of deep affection, adding as she does so: "I speak of Mr. Barnabee as I knew and know him and have not said half that I feel about him":

As I endeavor to give expression of my appreciation of Mr. Henry Clay Barnabee's remarkable personality, the feeling of which I am most distinctly conscious is the irreparable blank which the absence of that personality has caused in

the lyric stage of today. From my early childhood I have preserved a clear record in my memory of the innumerable characters which he made his own and which by sheer force of his talent he made into creations which often surpassed the conceptions of either author or composer. Although, year by year as my childhood crept on I became familiar with the constant repetitions of his various interpretations, yet such was the versatility of his talent that I cannot recollect a sensation of either weariness or tedium. Can one say more of an artist than that he never repeated himself?

I should require too much space if I would attempt to quote in detail the various characters which I watched him portray, but of the many which glow most deeply in my memory is his impersonation of the Sheriff of Nottingham in "Robin Hood." I can still see him in the second act disguised as a tinker who, overcome by the influence of liquor, endeavors to exit by a door which he only reaches after some of the most humorous and circuitous efforts which it has ever been my good fortune to see on any stage.

I hope that my opinion of Mr. Barnabee as an artist will not be considered biased because I bear him the deepest affection as my stage father. He, together with his dear lamented wife, were like parents to me, and I shall ever think of them with the feelings of a devoted daughter.

ALICE NIELSEN.

Miss Helen Bertram recalls her days with "The Bostonians," "a feeble effort," as she puts it, "to express loving thoughts":

Dear Uncle Barney,—Do you remember how I enjoyed your stories, and, generally after gasping with laughter, said, "How lovely!" and settled down to listen to another story,

which you, one of the greatest story-tellers in the world, gladly kept on to amuse your friends?

I have only the tenderest remembrances of the three years as your prima donna (soprano) with the "Bostonians." And now I have this chance to pay a tribute to my former manager and friend, the Sheriff of Nottingham.

"I am the Sheriff of Nottingham,
My eye is like the eagle's"

is the song that rings in my ears. When we quit the stage we have only the memory of the songs we have sung and the parts we have played. And so my memory lovingly holds in its remembrance my days—mine and Little Rosina with Uncle and Aunty Barney. My warmest wish is that you find these years filled with contentment and the same happy memories.

HELEN BERTRAM.

Pauline Hall, the operatic singer, and now appearing as prima donna in the revival of Gilbert & Sullivan's productions, writes in a note to the editor:

I cannot say too many lovely sweet things of the many charities of Henry Clay Barnabee. The same holds true of his wife. Anything you would say about them I would be only too happy to endorse.

PAULINE HALL.

Jessie Bartlett Davis!* How many good things she might have contributed to the pages of this volume if she were alive! The greatest of all prima donnas, it is to be regretted that she is not among us to turn the pages of the life story of the one she loved so dearly. "If she had had no wonderful gift," writes one, "one

*Mrs. Davis died May 14, 1905.—Editor.

would have loved her just the same for her tender, loyal, generous, sunshiny nature. She was a sweet, loving wife and mother, and although a great singer comes only once in a lifetime, the world was all the happier, all the better, all the more faithful to itself because when the gift of song was so royally bestowed, it was given to a pure, good, true-hearted womanly woman."

From Mr. Barnabee's cherished keepsakes, the editor takes the liberty of copying the following. It is right from the heart of the great singer and should be accorded a place among these tributes:

Narragansett Hotel,
Providence, R. I.

October 14th, '98.

Our dear Barney,—If I should use up all the paper in the hotel, I could not begin to tell you how *we all* miss you. It is not the "Bostonians" in any respect without *you*. And the "dear public" gives all of us the blackest looks, as much as to say, "How dare you sing 'Promise Me' without Barnabee in the cast?"

I know you will be well and the smartest chick in the nest next Monday night. Everybody in your employ join me in sending you our deepest love.

With my best love to both of you,

Your JESSIE.

The late Fanny Janauschek, the great German actress, once wrote to Barnabee after witnessing one of his operas:

The singing was splendid—so the acting. Your artistic performance reminds me so much of our good old days. With heartiest wishes for your prosperity, believe me,

Ever your sincere admirer,

JANAUSCHEK.

In one of his splendid personal letters to "the Grand Old Man," Francis Wilson, the noted comedian and actor, says, among other things:

You have no idea how much you are respected and loved by your profession and the public for the infinite and abundant pleasure you gave over so many years, the happiness you wrought by the skill and earnestness of your art, and the gentle, loving character of your nature.

All hail to you, Barnabee! God bless you and preserve to you for many years the radiance of your disposition.

Ever sincerely,

FRANCIS WILSON.

The following interesting lines are from Eugene Cowles, the original Will Scarlet in "Robin Hood," and one of the most popular bassos in America today.

Dear Sir,—

It is very kind of you to allow me to add any words (poor as they may be) to the many tributes which you will receive regarding my old friend and manager, Henry Clay Barnabee.

Mr. Barnabee and Mr. W. H. MacDonald engaged me when I was a very young man to sing the leading basso roles in the famous Bostonians. I met them at a Press Club concert in Chicago, which led to a conference with them shortly after and the engagement.

I was a member of the organization for ten years, and can

safely say that I know Mr. Barnabee as well as any man living knows him. He is a man of rugged honesty, peculiar temper and temperament, kindhearted and generous to a fault; as alive to what is going on in the world at seventy-seven as he was twenty years ago, and this in spite of physical disability caused by two serious accidents, which would have placed anyone with a less rugged constitution and a feebler will in an invalid chair or on crutches.

Mr. Barnabee has been blamed, as were the other owners of the "Bostonians," for not accumulating a large "nest-egg" in the time of their wonderful prosperity and the fact that they did not must seem strange and almost unpardonable to many. However, I think I can explain in a great measure their failure to do so, and in speaking of the acts of the "Bostonians," I am referring to the policy of Mr. Barnabee, for he was always the senior manager.

First: They were the first managers to give encouragement to native composers, and always had faith in them; so that while they had two successes, "Robin Hood" by Reginald De Koven, and the "Serenade" by Victor Herbert, they put on a great many pieces by American composers which were absolute failures, and anyone who knows the theatrical business can give you an idea of how much may be lost on a comic opera production, which falls short of success.

Second: They were extremely generous not only to personal friends, but to members of the theatrical profession. I know of more than one, or two, or three cases where they provided backing for young actors who appeared in the galaxy of stars and who failed, perhaps through no fault of their own. On more than one occasion they sent entire companies to New York from San Francisco. These companies were stranded; closed in San Francisco by unscrupulous eastern managers, and without saying anything to the members of their own company even, Barnabee and his

partners paid railroad fares for the stranded actors and sent them to New York.

Third: I was with the company during the disastrous season of 1893–4, when the theatrical business was at a low ebb and cash was a scarcity. Yet Mr. Barnabee never allowed a Saturday to go by with a single salary unpaid, even if he was forced to borrow money on personal collateral to fill out the pay roll.

Fourth: They never gave anyone a "two weeks' notice." In the cases of numerous singers engaged at the opening of the season who failed to make good, the management carried them uncomplainingly all the season from Maine to California and back, and handed them their envelopes every Saturday until summer (or death) released them.

These are some of the reasons why money didn't stick to Henry Clay Barnabee, and while these reasons would probably be ridiculed by the theater manager of today, they are to me evidences of his kind heart and his Americanism.

Professionally, Mr. Barnabee was in a class by himself; it seems to me his chief hold upon the audiences was due to his clear-cut enunciation. Every syllable of song or dialogue was crisp and distinct. To this was added an extremely comical physiognomy and the keenest sense of humor. Of course many of your readers will recall his Lord Allcash in "Fra Diavolo," Pasha in "Fatinitza," Chrysos in "Pygmalion," and Sheriff in "Robin Hood." In each of these roles, as well as in many others, he always gave an elegant impersonation, quite apart from low comedy; always Bostonian, always *Barnabee*, but always *good*.

His sense of humor referred to above helped him through many annoyances in his professional and managerial days, and now this comical twist of his nature enables him to face old age and infirmity with serenity.

His father and mother lived to be very, very old, and I sincerely hope he will follow their example.

With kind regards and appreciation of your work, I remain,

Yours very sincerely,

EUGENE COWLES.

William E. Philp, the English tenor, formerly of "The Bostonians," sends in the following appreciation to be included among the offerings:

Early in the summer of 1896 I was singing in the original production of "The Geisha" at Daly's Theater in London. As there were a number of uncommonly good things on the London stage at that time, Mr. Barnabee in his annual English visit had left "The Geisha" until the last week of his stay. On this evening when I finished my first song, he paid me the great compliment of setting aside his righteous protest against program selling, and sent for one of these luxuries to learn my name. The next morning Mr. Barnabee came to see me, and asked me if I would go out to America with him to sing "Robin Hood." I replied that I would certainly do so if Mr. George Edwardes would consent to release me from my contract with him. This having been done, I sailed for America that week, and so began my work with "The Bostonians" and my warm and unswerving friendship with Henry Clay Barnabee, a friendship that has grown with the passing of years, and has been a strong factor in my professional life, and of the highest value to me personally.

And what a company was "The Bostonians"! There has never been another like it, in America or in England. The production was always perfect. Every unity preserved, no one person exalted at the expense of another role, and the highest possible standard generally sustained. We shall

never again see its like, I fear. It was always a deep regret to me that London never saw "Robin Hood" produced by "The Bostonians" as they only could present it. How pit and stalls alike would have enjoyed the Sheriff's unctuous humor and his incomparable fun-making! Clever as Barnabee was in "The Serenade," and he certainly was screamingly funny, his second-act work in "Robin Hood" has always seemed to me quite the best comedy I ever saw on any stage. And could anyone sing and act the "Cork Leg" as did "Barney"? Never.

What a record it is to have given such fine whole-souled amusement to generations of play-goers through so many years!

Mr. Barnabee has a peculiar genius for friendship, and he gives his affectionate interest most freely. If a man is down on his luck, there is always warm encouragement. One goes on with confidence increased by his kindly words and valuable advice, and one's success is not complete until the veteran dean of comic opera has spoken his "Well done, my boy!"

Long life to him, say we all, and may peace and happiness, and the assurance of the love of his friends crown his days!

WILLIAM E. PHILP.

Mr. Tom Karl, whose relations with Barnabee date back to the days and nights of "Pinafore," drops an anchor into friendship's sea for his Admiral:

Mr. Henry C. Barnabee has given in his "Reminiscences" so charming, entertaining, and pleasing an account of his long and famous career before the public that it seems superfluous to add more than the tribute of one who, through many years of close personal friendship, admired always Mr. Barnabee's splendid traits of character: a friend always, who endured to the end, kind to a fault, and generous—

never with a thought of anything that might accrue to him from it or looking for a *quid pro quo.*

The years with the "Boston Ideals" and "The Bostonians" brought more and more of artistic work together. To Barnabee it brought praise—justly earned praise, for his refined comedy work which was a refreshing contrast to the clowning which seemed to be always associated with the beautiful light operas then in vogue.

On my return from California, two years ago, we again became associated in a work before the public, frequently called the "Barnabee and Karl Evenings." In Boston, Springfield, Utica, Syracuse and other places, we received an ovation quite equal to the old days in opera. Mr. Barnabee's memory at this time enabled him to give greater pleasure than ever in a revival of old songs, finely rendered poems and recitations. We offered duets and presented a most amusing and clever musical sketch, arranged by Mr. Barnabee, in which we both had fine opportunities. Mr. Barnabee often gave vent to his feelings by remarking, "These fine audiences of old and new friends, and the way they receive us with such enthusiasm, mean more than money could ever buy." And I will never forget the receptions after the entertainments where so many old friends wanted to take us by the hand.

Words cannot adequately express all that I would say, but the days with dear "Barney" and his most lovely wife (whom everybody adored) were among the happiest during my whole career in America.

This is but a poor tribute, but I can only say with the poet Tom Moore:

> I give you all I can—no more,
> Though poor the offering be.

Faithfully yours,

TOM KARL.

The following letter is one addressed to Mr. Barnabee from Mr. "Jack" Barnes, an English actor of fine reputation, who has been in this country several times and for several seasons was a valuable member of Joseph Jefferson's Company:

Dear Sir: I had the pleasure of being at the Standard Theater last evening to see and hear "Robin Hood." Believing it must be gratifying to an artist to know that an experienced critic approves of the rendition of an important character, I take this early opportunity to say that your performance was one of the most perfect I have ever seen. Your singing, your speaking, your bearing, your graceful dancing, your acting in every detail was faultless. You have a refinement of fun and natural ready wit, and, while it compels laughter, it will never offend the most refined and cultured people.

Sincerely your friend,

BARNES.

A feeling tribute from Henry A. Barkis:

It is with never failing pleasure and satisfaction that I look back to the old days—the good old splendid days—of "The Bostonians." They stood for something that was well worth while. They touched a chord that was deeper and truer than any of their fellows ever did.

To the good old "King of Comic Opera," whom I am pleased and proud to count as my dear personal friend, I am ever ready to do homage as a loyal subject. His reign is not over, nor will it ever be, in the hearts of those who were privileged to know his influence as an artist and man. All this is very trite. It has been said by so many others, but it may not have been said by any who feel it more

strongly and sincerely. The good things that men do for their own age and generation live on forever, I think—and their influence must be handed along in popular appreciation and national taste that has been pushed along so many pegs by their beneficent art.

I wonder if the greatest satisfaction comes to you now in the knowledge and realization of what you have done for the delight of untold thousands, or in the standard that you have set upon the art you have served so splendidly, or in the place you have won, enshrined in the hearts of so many men and women whom you never even knew, but to whom you were so honored and beloved beyond all others in the world of opera? Whichever may be the greatest, there must be joy in them all.

HENRY A. BARKIS.

University Club, Providence.

The following is a comment from the famous man and wit of California, the late George T. Bromley, known far and wide as "Uncle" George Bromley. It is transcribed by Miss Marion Smith, granddaughter of the noted man, from her recollection of a letter dictated by him after reading the first few chapters of the reminiscences:

My dear Mr. Barnabee:

I cannot begin to tell you how much I am enjoying the reading of your "Reminiscences." They are so full of good things, and recall so much that I had almost forgotten. Your description of the "Old Home Week" in Portsmouth recalls the similar occasions held at Norwich, Connecticut, my old home. I had fully expected to be present on such an occasion, and enjoy with the present and former residents

the delightful home gathering of those I knew so long ago. So many of those you mention as attending at Portsmouth are familiar to me—particularly Benjamin P. Shillaber, creator of Mrs. Partington, who was out here in California, and whose articles made him so well known everywhere. The name of Thomas Starr King also brings up thoughts of early days in California, for he was the first Unitarian minister in California, as well as in San Francisco.

In some respects our schooldays are alike, for my recollections though vague on most points are very clear on the subject that I "crept like a snail, unwillingly," and our schoolmasters used the same method of instilling knowledge by the use of the ferule.

Your story of the barrel of molasses upsetting on the street recalls an equally sad experience of my own in which I also landed in it. Every boy in the neighborhood had his fill of molasses for a time at least.

I am looking forward with much interest to the publishing of the rest of the memoirs, for I know that with the beginning which I have heard (the book was read aloud to Uncle George), the rest will be brimful of interest. I only wish I could read it faster than once a month, but in this way I can at least be thankful, as it will last longer.

God bless you, my dear friend, and bring you all success.

Most sincerely yours,

"UNCLE" GEORGE BROMLEY.

From a personal letter received from Arthur Malcolm Dow, we extract a few lines:

I always loved to hear Myron Whitney sing, but there is no one who ever could make the thrills run down my back as you could when you sang "The Three Fishers." Do you remember Mrs. Celia Thaxter telling you "Never for God's

sake sing that song down here again," after you had given it at some place like Gloucester or Portsmouth? I remember Marie Wainwright saying once about thirty years ago that she never heard anyone put the soul and pathos into that same old song that you did when you sang it at the cottage in Nahant one Saturday night back in the early eighties. It seems to me that you ought to incorporate those two items in your reminiscences as they came from people of discernment, and I always like to have tribute paid to your tragic as well as your humorous talents.

From Harry B. Smith, dramatic author. Author: "Robin Hood," "Rob Roy," "The Little Corporal," "The Fortune Teller," "The Serenade," and other librettos.

As a collector of books, I have assembled on my shelves all the biographical records of the great players of the past. These volumes are enriched with the autographs of the famous actors and quaint old engravings of tragedians and comedians "in their habit as they lived"—Garrick and Woffington, Kemble and Kean, Kitty Clive and Mrs. Siddons; Talma and Rachael, the Jeffersons and the Booths; all the great names whose triumphs are a legend. The painter, the poet, the sculptor, all leave their creations to the world to prove their artistry; but the actor "carves his image in snow." The phrase is Lawrence Barrett's. All that remains of a great actor's triumphs is what is written in a book. So it is fortunate that so many have written about the players, and better still, that so many actors have written of themselves; for they write with grace and humor. Surely one of the most delightful of all books is the Autobiography of Joseph Jefferson. That my dear old friend Barnabee is to write his memoirs should fill with

delightful anticipation all who know his humor as a story-teller and his fund of anecdote and experiences. Like Jefferson's book, it will remain as a record of an epoch in American theatrical history. Surely all who have seen Mr. Barnabee in his characterizations must hold him in grateful recollection. Who can forget his Sheriff of Nottingham? It deserves a full length portrait in the theatrical Hall of Fame beside Jefferson's Rip, Raymond's Colonel Sellers, and Florence's Captain Cuttle.

HARRY B. SMITH.

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